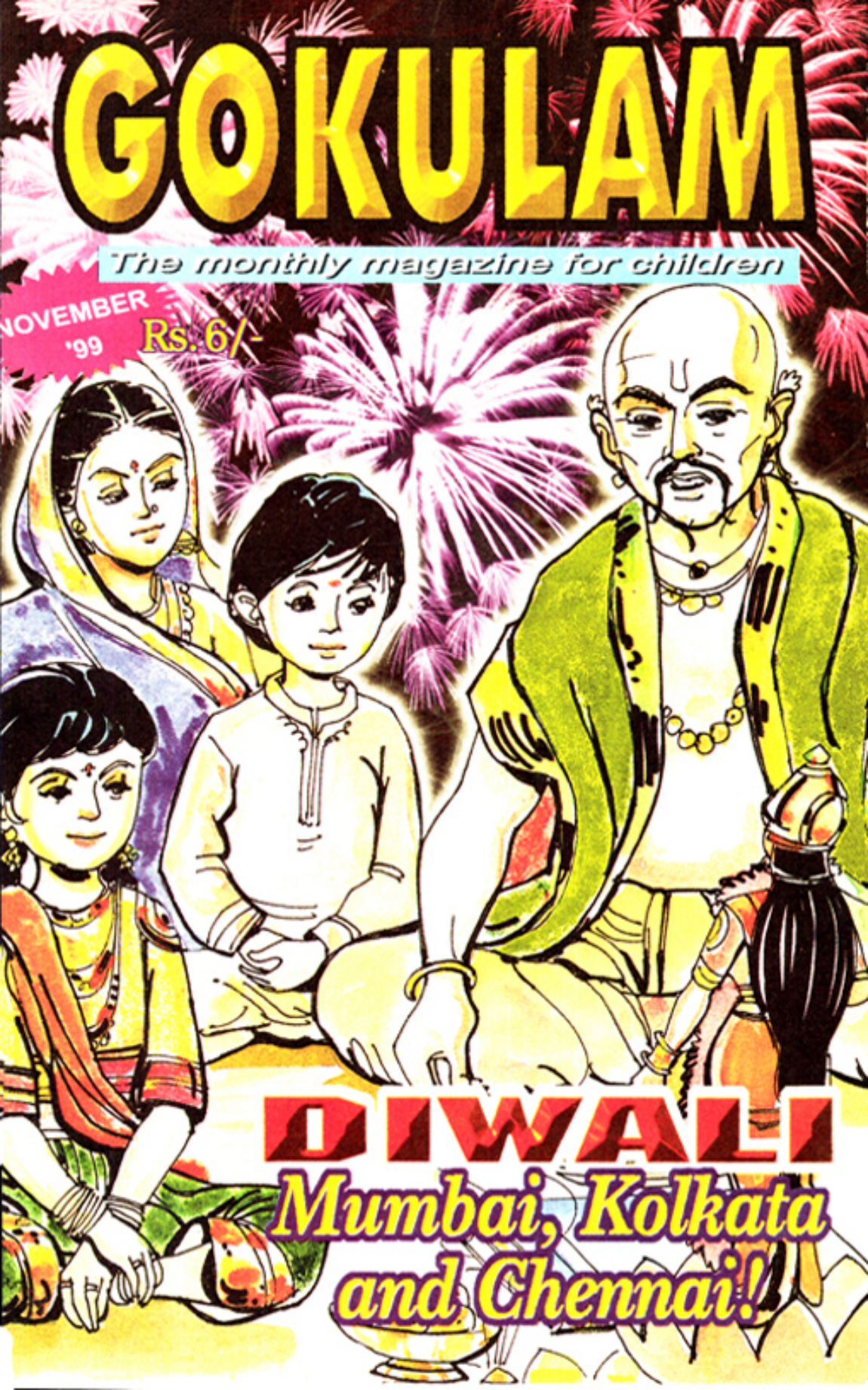
GOKULAM

The monthly magazine for children

NOVEMBER '99

Rs. 6/-

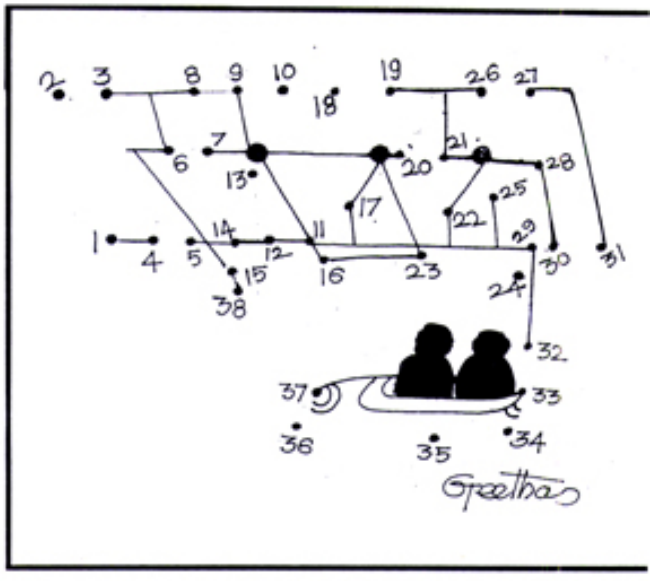


DIWALI

Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai!

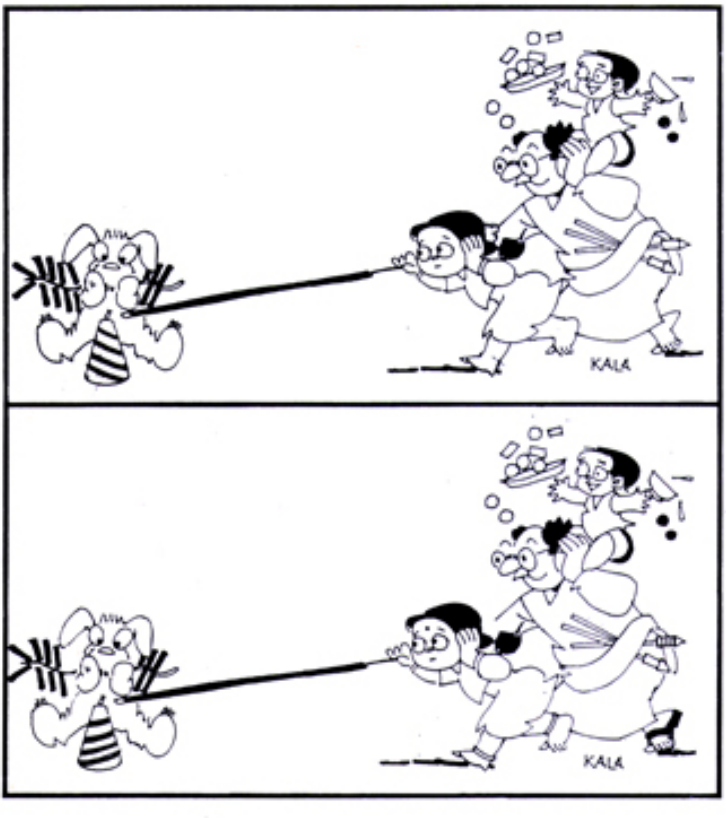
SHOW THE CHILDREN THE WAY TO REACH THE BUTTERFLY

Ans: C



JOIN THE DOTS

SPOT THE SEVEN DIFFERENCES



Bakery Clerk : Here is a very nice cake. I'm sure you'll like it.

Customer : Umm-m it looks like it was eaten by mice.

Bakery Clerk : Impossible, the cat had been lying on it all day.

T. Shankar,
Belvior Int., Colombo.

Ans. : 1. No. of crackers in the dog's hand, 2. Lines on the flower pot, 3. The 'dot' on the girl's forehead, 4. Man's slippers, 5. Design on the rocket, 6. Flower in the girl's braid, 7. The girl's anklets.

GOKULAM

Vol. XII, No. 5 NOVEMBER 1999

Dear children,

You must have read about the coup in Pakistan. The army took over the administration and the Nawaz Sharif government has been dismissed.

It is really sad that democracy in our neighbouring country is having such ups and downs. This is the fourth spell of military rule there.

• Nawaz Sharif

While we would like democracy to be restored as early as possible, it would not be incorrect to say that the Nawaz Sharif regime committed several blunders chief amongst which is the Kargil adventure. So, very few would shed a tear for the plight in which the former Prime Minister finds himself.

Wars never help, particularly the Kargil invasion was unethical and against international law and world opinion. In a war, the invading country as well as the defending country suffer terribly. Besides losing precious lives their economy is also badly affected.

• Gen. Musharraf

A military dictatorship for a few months might do good for Pakistan. But it should not be a permanent feature. Let us pray for democracy to thrive again.

Military rule need not necessarily mean more border skirmishes or a full scale war. It all depends on the person in power. If General Musharraf sees the futility of war he will put an end to armed incursions into Kashmir by militants and concentrate in nation building.

Friendship, goodwill and cooperation between neighbouring countries can work wonders in industry and commerce and both countries can thrive.

Let us hope for better relations with Pakistan in future. Let both countries invest more in industries and less in weapons of destruction.

Love,

K. Rajendran,
Editor

Of all created things the loveliest,
And most divine are children.
— William Canton

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Cover Illustration : LALITHA

I like The Village Boy, Fantasia, Balltoons etc. I love your magazine. Can I send my articles on 25 paise post card?

M. Steve, age 13, Vellore.

Dear Steve,

You may send your article on a 25 paise post card. Please mention your name, age, class and your house address. Don't forget to mention your school's name. Any contribution from any reader will be published on acceptance only.

I have been reading your magazine for six years. I liked the story "The Letter" by Janakan.

LETTER BOX

Can't you introduce a question-and-answer column?

Archana Vasudevan, age 14, SDGHV School, Chennai.

Dear Archana,

You are welcome to send in your questions. We shall try to answer them.

How should I send picture stories like Appu and Kuku?

N. Santhosh, age 12, Std VIII, KV ONGC, Mumbai.

Dear Santhosh,

***Appu and Kuku** is done by our artist here. Try sending some other stories. Please don't forget to add your age or class, name of school and your house address.*

Thank you for publishing my contribution (Wildlife conservation) in the Viewpoint (Sept '99) column. Can I send in games? How do I send them?

Nishi Kant, Std. IX C, KV, Koliwada, Mumbai.

Dear Nishi Kant,

Send us a rough sketch of your game. An artist from our panel will develop on the concept. Don't forget to add the details like your name, age

HOW THE KANGAROO GOT ITS NAME

Here's an interesting anecdote. The Kangaroos were given the name by the English captain James Cook who discovered Australia. Pointing to one of the animals, he asked an Australian native what it was called. "Kangaroo" replied the man. In his language it meant "I don't know". From that day they were called Kangaroo.

B. Srikanth, Std. IX B,
Dr. S. Hussain Zaheer Memorial HS,
Hyderabad.

---

or class, name of school, and your house address.

Not allowed to camp!

After reading your article on 'camping' I suggested to my friends that we camp out at a place (about one km from my house). But my parents refused. Can you suggest a way out?

T. Suresh, Std. VIII,
Cheran MHSS, Karur.

Dear Suresh,

Perhaps you could rope in the elders too. Then when you are a little older you can camp out with friends. Best of luck!

Kumar is the father of Ramu. This year, Kumar's age is 4 times than that of Ramu's. 5 years back, Kumar's age was 7 times that of Ramu's. What are the ages of Kumar and Ramu this year? After how many years will Kumar's age double Ramu's age and what will be their ages then?

K. Muthukumar, XI A, Rajapalayam.

Answer : This year Kumar's age = 40. This year, Ramu's age = 10. After 20 years, Kumar's age will double his son, Ramu's age. At that time, their ages will be 60 and 30 respectively.

THE GREAT MUSICIAN

If there's any great musician in our universe, then it is the Sun. Today, geologists are trying to hear the sound waves emanating from the sun. India has also joined the quest as a member of the Global Association Network Group (GONG).

A laboratory has been set up at Udaipur. There are only six such laboratories in the world, including the one at Udaipur. Here, the vibrations occurring on the surface of the sun are studied. The method of measuring earthquakes is called Seismology. The method of studying the quakes on the sun is called Helio-seismology.

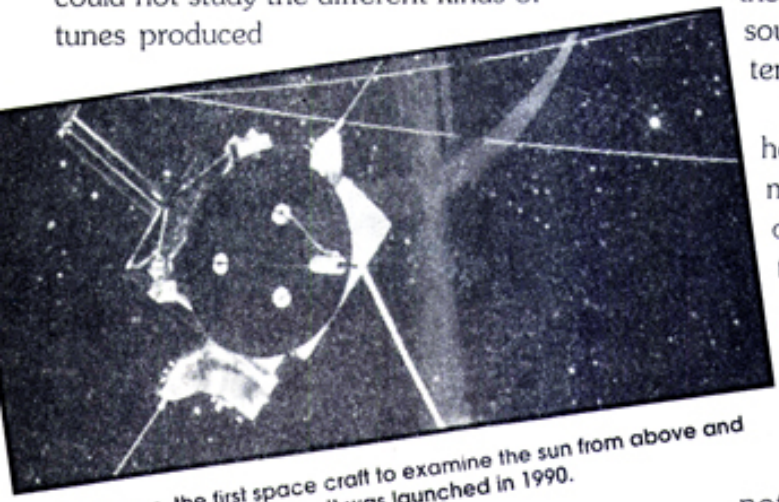
This study helps us to understand what the sun is made up of. As on earth, quakes occur on the surface of the sun. Changes occur constantly. Every five minutes a quake occurs on the surface of the sun. In terms of music, every second 20 hertz frequency of sound waves are produced.

The sun is made up of hydrogen. It doesn't have a solid surface like the earth. Changes that occur between the gases inside the sun are termed as a quake. Earlier, scientists believed that quakes occurred at indefinite frequency. Now, scientists have discovered that these tunes are flowing at a constant rate.

During the 70's, scientists believed that sound flowing at a constant frequency was restricted only to certain parts of the sun's surface. Such parts were known as containers. Big-sized containers meant small-bass tones and small containers meant loud tones.

Our piano has only 88 tunes, but the sun has more than one crore

tunes. All these have varying frequencies and depths. Helio-seismology helps scientists to study them. Till the establishment of GONG, scientists could not study the different kinds of tunes produced by the sun.



• Ulysses, the first space craft to examine the sun from above and below. It was launched in 1990.

After the launch of Solar and Helio-spheric observatory in 1995, it was easy to study the sun. Today scientists have come up with a strong proof-based theory regarding the sun, of what it is made up, of its birth 4.6 billion years ago and of the changes on its surface till now.

Scientists can now predict the changing temperature and the state of the matter. Changes in sound waves depend on temperature.

The changes also help scientists to determine the temperature on the sun's surface through computers.

Scientists claim only 0.1% error in their predictions. They have learnt that changes occur not only on the sun's surface but also in its interiors. This could be why sunspots occur.

Though scientists have discovered quite a lot about the sun, there's still plenty to discover and learn about.

Bhautik P. Joshi, age 16, Mumbai.

CAR CRAZE!

If you thought the craze for cars is only in the west then you would be wrong.

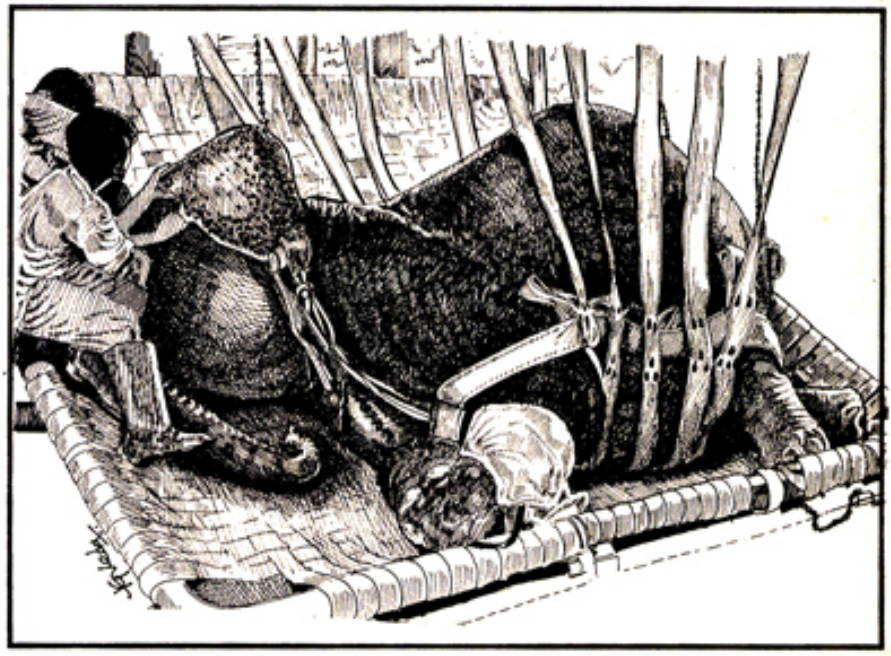
When Maruti was first introduced, the number of those who wanted to own them were more than the number of cars available. So, the people who had money were willing to pay more than the car was really worth. Today there are so many brands of cars available that there is no premium on the prices.

V. Nallasivan, VII A, SJSSJS, Tirunelveli.

NEWS BITS

Land-mine victim gets new life

An elephant was a victim of land-mine some time ago. Motola is a 38 year old elephant who stepped on a land-mine while foraging in the deep jungles of Southern Burma.



The mahout and his elephant walked for three days through the jungle. They then travelled by truck to the Hang Chat Elephant Hospital in Thailand. By this time, Motola's leg was badly infected. Before operating, Motola's injured foot was placed in a black plastic garbage bag which contained cloth soaked in antiseptic.

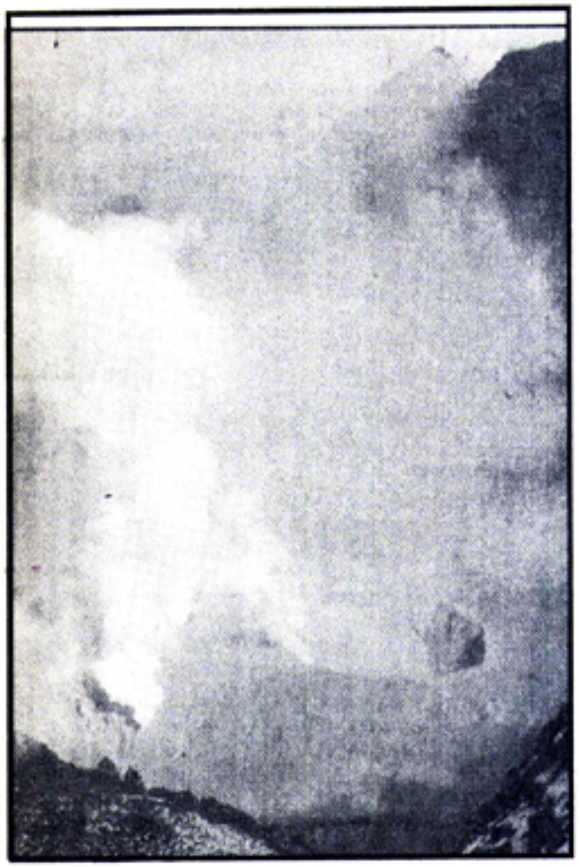
Motola could not be suspended from a crane and operated upon. A giant sling and a cot were made from a fire-fighting hose. Motola was administered anasthesia before the operation. The operation which lasted three hours was not very complicated.

The doctors fed her on 20 litres of glucose and five bunches of banana every day. Motola's foot is in a sling now. The doctors say that the pachyderm is well on the recovery path. A US firm plans to develop a prosthetic foot for Motola.

The people of Thailand have donated generously towards the cost of operation and the maintenance of the animal.

Ice creams so cheap!

If your pocket money doesn't



permit you to splurge in expensive candies then you shouldn't worry. A new arrival in the ice cream market won't make a hole in your pocket. The ice candy called Max UNO is priced Re. One. So, you can have two (or is it 12?) instead of just one!

China celebrates National Day

More than one million Chinese participated in the festivities on China's national day. China celebrated the 50th anniversary of the People's Republic of China on October 1. Huge lanterns adorned Tiananmen Square in Beijing. A colourful parade was held.

Volcano eruption

The Guagua Pichincha volcano, located 12 km. from Quito, capital of Eucador could erupt anytime. Vapour was seen rising from the crater of the volcano.
Scientists expect it to erupt in a matter of days or weeks.

MY FRIEND

Oh, my friend, I love you,
You help me in many ways,
But how am I going to pay you back?
An act of love is what I'll do.
Love can make friends of enemies,
Love has many meanings,
Friendship has but one meaning.
Not all the money of this world can buy love,
So, I'll pay back by being
A good friend, caring and loving.

L. Thangalakshmi, Std. VII C,
St. Joseph's Anglo Indian GHSS,
Trichy.

UNDIR STORY

A DIFFERENT Friend!

No one lived in the house next to the Undir family's. Sister and Brother Undir often played in the lawn of the vacant house. A huge boulder formed a platform. The two Undirs would take turns to jump down from the boulder. One Satuday afternoon, they saw a truck loaded with furniture and other household things, draw up by the gate of the vacant house.

"What fun! Looks like we are going to have new neighbours!" said Brother.

"Don't count your chickens before they are hatched!" replied Sister.

"I'm not counting anything!" Brother was indignant, not quite understanding.

"You dummy! We don't know what the new neighbours are going to be like! Let's watch before feeling thrilled." Actually Sister Undir was just as excited as Brother. Both of them walked closer to the truck and watched. A large man with a moustache got down from the seat next to the driver. He started to supervise. Three helpers deftly got to work. Down came the fridge. Then came a dining table and chairs. Some large wooden boxes were next. And so on.

"There are four cots! That means children!" observed Sister.

"I hope they are boys!"

"And I, girls! But whatever they are I hope they are not too big or too little!"

"Yes, that won't be any good!"

The large man looked at Sister and Brother, as if about to say something. But they felt so embarrassed that they shrieked and

scampered away to the safety of their own tree house. Mama called out to them.

"Ma! We have new neighbours!" panted Brother. "And we think they have children!" exclaimed Sister.

"Calm down and finish your milk!" said Papa Undir, sipping his tea.

"Let them settle down, then we can go and meet them to see if they

want anything" suggested Mama.

Brother could hardly contain himself. He swallowed his milk and grabbed Sister, urging her to come out. The two of them ran out but hesitated in front of the gate next door.

"Come on in!" said a kind voice. It was the large man. 'He doesn't sound as scary as he looks', they thought. Sister and Brother mustered up the courage to go in. There they saw a young mouse, a little older than Brother, spread out on the floor and working on a jigsaw puzzle. "Hello! I'm Buzz! What are your names?"

Soon they got talking and spread out on the floor with Buzz doing the jigsaw puzzle together. The parents were busy arranging the house. The large man turned out to be Buzz's father. "Tell me when you want to get up, Buzzy. I'll bring your calipers!" he said.

"Don't you have another child in the house?" Sister asked. "We saw four cots, you see!" explained Brother Undir.

"Yes, my brother is older. He's called Fuzz. He doesn't like to be with me because of my legs, you see!" replied Buzz matter of factly.

That's when Sister and Brother noticed. Yes, his legs looked different — a little crooked and bony. He couldn't stand or walk or run like other children. Brother Undir was curious. "Let me see! Turn this way!" he asked. Sister nudged him trying to make him stop. She was older and embarrassed. "But I do want to see!" persisted Brother Undir, as Buzz proceeded to show him. Sister Undir could not bear it. She got up and ran home. Brother stayed on to talk and play with Buzz.

Soon Buzz's father brought in his calipers and helped strap them on. "What are they?" Brother wanted to know. "They are a kind of splint to support Buzz's legs."

"But what's happened to his legs? Why does he need these things?"

"Oh, he's had an attack of polio. That can cripple your legs" replied Buzz's father. Brother Undir who had really started to like Buzz wanted to know all about him.

"Polio is a very infectious disease. It is caused by a virus" explained Buzz.

"What does the virus do?" asked Brother.

"Well, it affects the central nervous system of the patient and can result in paralysis. In Buzz's case his legs have been affected' said the father.

"The nerves in my spinal chord got inflamed and that's what made my leg muscles atrophy."

"What's atrophy?" Brother Undir wanted to know.

"Well, that means they waste away or don't grow. So I need to wear these calipers to help me walk about by myself."

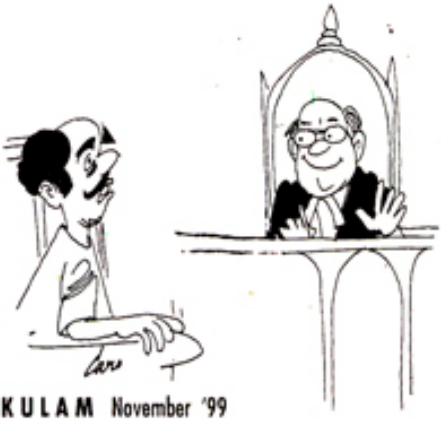
"Does that mean you won't get better?" Brother wanted to know.

"Oh, I will. If I wear these as I grow. Anyway, I'm glad you like jigsaw puzzles!"

"We can do them often now that you live so close!" said Brother as he got up to go.

Judge: Do you know where you will go if you tell lies?
Ram: To hell.
Judge: And truth?
Ram: To jail.

Pratik Jakharia, age 13,
V.P.M. Eng.HS, Mumbai



"Come tomorrow! We can play scrabble. I have lots of board games!" said Buzz.

"I will! Bye!"

"Bye!"

At home Sister Undir pretended as if she didn't want to know anything. Brother was telling Mama all about his new friend. "He has a brother but I didn't meet him. Buzz is great at jigsaw puzzles and other board games!"

"Mama, Brother was rude" complained Sister. And out came the story about Buzz's polio. "It's not rude if he was not making Buzz feel awkward" felt Papa. "Well, tomorrow is Sunday. We can invite them for lunch!" suggested Mama Undir.

"But Ma, please make Brother promise not to notice Buzz's legs!" begged Sister.

"I'm doing no such thing! How can you not look at something so obvious? Anyway, Buzz doesn't mind!" declared Brother.

So Buzz, Fuzz and their parents came over to the Undir family tree house on Sunday for lunch. After introductions Mama Undir settled the boys with some lemon juice while the parents started to get acquainted.

"You can walk all right! Just a little crooked!" exclaimed Brother. "Shut up!" whispered Sister under her breath. "Buzz, do you mind if I notice your legs?" asked Brother. "No, I guess not! I've had this for so long

that now I don't know what it is like any other way!" replied Buzz. Fuzz was looking elsewhere, pretending that Buzz did not exist.

"Should we play scrabble!" suggested Brother. "What about cards? Do you have cards?" asked Buzz, "I know some really smart card tricks!"

Now both Sister and Brother Undir loved and played a lot of card games. But neither was very good at card tricks. They pulled out a pack of cards and were soon lost in Buzz's magic world. He was extremely quick and knew many, many card tricks.

Buzz asked them to select a card secretly and put it back in the pack. Then he would shuffle the pack and ask one of them to tap his hand. All but the chosen card would fall! Trick after trick! He held Sister and Brother spellbound! Sister even forgot her embarrassment.

Nobody noticed Fuzz. He had wandered off by himself. Crash! There was a sudden sound of breaking glass. Fuzz had toppled his glass of juice and broken it. "Go on! Complain! I did it on purpose!" challenged Fuzz.

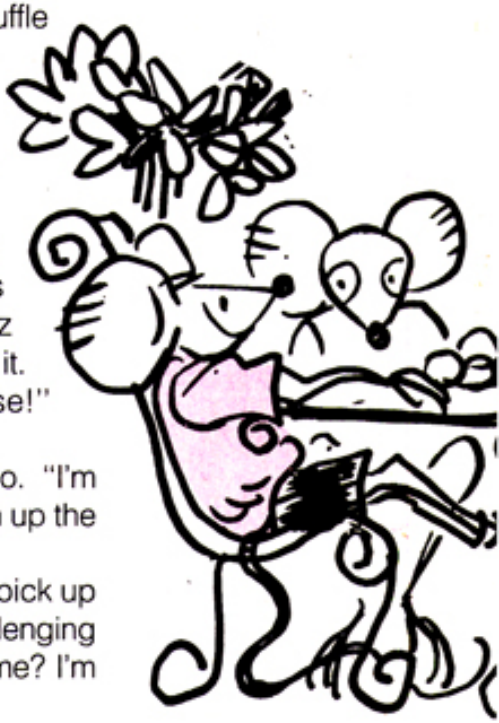
None of the other kids knew what to do. "I'm sorry about him!" said Buzz. "Let's clean up the mess."

So Sister, Brother and Buzz started to pick up the pieces of broken glass. Fuzz kept challenging them. "Why don't you complain about me? I'm the bad guy here!"

The commotion made the parents come in. "Oh no!" said Buzz and Fuzz's mother. "He's had his angry fit again!"

"Shh! Let me handle this" said the father, taking the older Fuzz by his hand and holding him close. "Please go away all of you! Fuzz and I will join you for lunch in just a little while."

So the two mothers, Papa Undir and the three children trooped down to the dining table. As the children heaped food on to their plates, Buzz and Fuzz's mother explained how Buzz had needed special attention since he had had his polio attack. "In spite of his



vaccinations! That's what delayed the diagnosis. No one expected it to be polio because he was properly vaccinated!"

"Perhaps the

vaccine was not good! It has to be kept in a cold storage right through. Maybe there was a little rise in temperature. Its no good after that!" suggested Mama Undir.

"Whatever the reason, poor Buzz got ill and it took a long time for the doctors to realise that he had polio!"

"After that he got a lot of attention. We

were naturally very worried. The doctors even counselled the family on how to make Buzz feel like everyone else. 'Try not to make him feel the burden of his disability' he told all of us. So we talked about it normally and made sure he did too. He copes rather well, and we are proud of him! But...."

Mama Undir understood. "In the process you forgot about Fuzz!"

"Not just that, we noticed that Fuzz was uncomfortable with Buzz. He did not seem to like his Brother. And we used to scold him to protect Buzz."

"But that only made matters worse!" added Buzz's father who had just then walked in. "I'll pick up a plate for Fuzz and go eat with him in the next room."

"I'll come too!" offered Sister Undir. So the two of them had lunch with Fuzz. Sister and Fuzz soon got talking. "First I didn't like his legs. People said he was 'different' and they thought they were being polite. But now I don't like him because he gets too much attention. He's a real show off! See how he was behaving in front of Brother and you! All those card tricks! And I'm supposed to put up with everything because of his handicap!" complained Fuzz.

"Oh, We enjoyed his tricks! Really! It wasn't like showing off! At first I was a little shy with him. But it looks as if we are all going to be neighbours and friends! We could exchange books and comics!" said Sister.

"Oh do you like books? That's great! I'd like to see your collection!"

The ice was broken. It was the beginning of a nice new friendship between the two families.

Anuradha Khati

Those wishing to contribute stories to the 'Undir Story' section may write to —
Dr. Anuradha K. Rajivan,
'Uttara', 3, Bay Side, East Coast Road,
Kottiwakkam, Chennai - 600 041.

STRANGE FACTS

of telephones is the United States of America, with an estimated 168 million instruments, in some 96 out of every 100 household. The second largest number is in Japan with the United Kingdom third.

1. When a silkworm makes its cocoon it spins more than 800 yards of silk in one unbroken length.

2. If you don't like wearing clothes, take a tip from the Japanese. At one time, some Japanese people used to cover themselves with tattoos rather than wear clothes.

3. The country with the greatest number

4. The tiny island of Sark in the Channel islands is one of the most peaceful places in Britain. The police force is just one officer!

5. Baby hippos are born underwater.

6. Blood normally accounts for one thirteenth of a person's total body weight.

7. In the 1920s crosswords were so popular that trains in America were supplied with puzzles and dictionaries in each compartment.

8. There was once a snake in London zoo which was fitted with a glass eye.

9. Horses often go to sleep standing up as well as lying down.

10. The Irish drink more tea per head than any nation in the world.

11. On a sunny day a large elm tree gives off vapour equal to 1,500 gallons of water.

12. Pearls are very pretty, but did you know it can take an oyster seven years to make one?

13. The game of marbles was first introduced into Britain by the Romans. The world championship is held every year in Sussex.

R. Ramya, Std. VIII B,
Hindu SS School, Adyar,
Chennai.

*When you talk ill of somebody behind their back it is called backbiting.

'Back' - the booster

The word 'Back' boosts up the meaning of several other words in English language. In fact it is as necessary for the successful expression of oneself as the back bone is for one's very existence.

'Back up' may be a reserve supply of provisions or the additional reinforcement of a police troop. 'Back track' is to retrace the path or the course by which one has just arrived. A 'back sword' has only one cutting edge. All the water bugs that swim on their backs are 'back swimmers'.

'Back spacer' moves the carriage of the typewriter one or more spaces backwards. A reformed person often 'Back slides' into his original ways. Cheerful friends greet each other heartily by slapping on the back. 'Back spin' arrests or retards or reverses the linear motion of a ball.

A 'back seat driver' is a person who constantly nags the driver, advising him and correcting him. Any person who persists in giving unsolicited advice is also a 'back seat driver' for he can't keep his lips sealed! On the other hand 'to take a back seat' means to remain quiet and unnoticed.

A person involved in receiving and giving of favours for personal gains is a 'back scratcher'. We can find many such persons around us. 'The Backs' stands for the gardens and the ground behind the colleges of Cambridge University that border the river Cam.

'Back room' is one in which confidential work — military or Governmental, is carried out and from which indirect influence is exercised. 'Backra, Backra' is how the Black people address a White person and is equivalent to 'Boss' or 'Sir'. Therefore a 'Backra house' and a 'Backra rum' are of excellent quality-good enough for the Boss!

'Back number' is an old fashioned person or a thing. 'Back log' is the accumulation of

unfinished work. By wearing a black 'backless' dress the beautiful women in show-business reveal their entire back.

'Backlash' is a sudden and strong adverse reaction. 'Backhander' is an indirect verbal attack. A 'back handed compliment' is actually an insult or a rebuke disguised as a compliment.

*A 'back seat driver' constantly nags the driver.

'Back gammon' is a game for two persons on a specially marked board with pieces whose movements are determined by throwing the dice. At times the best plot of a schemer 'backfires' on him producing unexpected and undesired results. 'Back drops' are essential for dramas, as they are elaborately painted screens that bring the scene on the stage to life.

'Back door entry' is a secret and surreptitious entry. 'Backcombing' from the ends of the hair to the roots gives fulness to the hair. 'Backchat' a repartee or an impertinent answering back is not an admirable quality in youngsters.

Working women have 'back breaking' routines. The remote and the sparcely populated areas in the interior of Australia are 'back blocks'. Slandering the character of a person who is not present is the famous 'back biting', which is to be avoided at all times and under all circumstances.

You 'go back on your word' when you fail to keep your promises. The restless tiger walks 'back and forth' in his cage. We should not 'back off' or 'back out' when we find the task ahead of us difficult. the man who forsakes his friend in need 'turns his back on him'. The complete betrayal of a trusting friend is 'stabbing in his back'.

A bed ridden, incapacitated person is said to be 'on his back'. When you 'put some one's back up' you annoy him. You 'get off his back' when you stop annoying him. 'Back to front' is the wrong way round! Things that happen 'behind one's back' take place without one's knowledge. One has to 'keep at the back of one's mind' whatever one wants to remember.

Now it is time for you to 'put your back into' learning and remembering all these expressions.

Visalakshi Ramani,
Coimbatore

Hello, DOCTOR!

* K. Prasanth,
Thiruvanaikovil

? Why should one watch TV from a distance?

! By sitting close to the TV we

increase the strain on the eyes which results in headache. Watching TV for hours together, causes refractory error too. Hence, one should sit atleast six feet away from the TV set.

* T.S. Arivazhagan,
Thiruppulivanam.

? Why does a heart attack occur? How can we prevent it?

! Heart attack occurs when there is a sudden blockage of the coronary arteries which supply the nutrients and oxygen to heart muscles. The blockage is usually caused by blood clots. As a result, blood supply to heart falls drastically and the heart dies. Survival of the patient depends on the severity of the attack and the treatment.

Smoking, alcohol consumption, lack of exercise, high serum cholesterol, high blood pressure and stress are closely related to heart attack. Avoid smoking and intake of alcohol. Regular exercise, a low-fat diet and learning to relax will help to prevent heart attacks.

* U. Kasinathan, Cholapuram.

? What is 'sinus trouble'?

! Sinusitis is the medical term for sinus trouble. It is a condition in which the sinuses are infected and inflammed. Sinuses are nothing

but air-filled spaces in the skull around the nose. Normally there is a small amount of secretion in these spaces. Whenever the upper respiratory tract is infected, the mucosa that lines the nose and sinuses become inflammed resulting in increased secretions. The sinus openings situated in the nasal cavity get blocked and the secretions accumulate in the sinuses. Hence, the symptoms of sinusitis arise. Nasal discharge, nasal block, sneezing, headache and mild fever are the earlier symptoms. If the discharge turns purulent, then it indicates that the infection is severe. In that case, an ENT surgeon must be consulted.

* B. Vigi, Kumanandhurai.

? My problem is dandruff. Please suggest the treatment, doctor!

! It is a kind of skin disease in which scales of the dead skin of the scalp are shed along with the dried secretion of the sebaceous glands. The best treatment for dandruff is to wash hair regularly with a medicated shampoo. Anti-fungal agents can be tried. If the problem is severe or persistent, consult a dermatologist.

* D. Ravichandran, Pennagaram.

? Please suggest a few remedies for obesity.

! The great Persian poet Saadi

wrote, "Eat not so much that food comes out of the mouth again and eat not so little that the soul comes out of the body". Abnormal eating behaviour is the essential cause for obesity.

Drugs can be taken if advised by a doctor. Here is how you can manage diet.

1. Eat only at meal times. Do not eat snacks between meals.
2. Stick to your normal diet with following reservations : a) Reduce the cooking oil used by half. b) Avoid butter and ghee. c) Avoid sweets, puddings, ice-creams, chocolates, creams, eggs and other fatty foods.
3. Diet control must be supplemented with exercise.

A brisk walk daily in the morning is the best exercise to reduce obesity.

Dr. G. Ganesan, Rajapalayam.

* India is home to a variety of amphibians.

PERISHING AMPHIBIANS

Amphibians include salamanders, toads and frogs. They are cold-blooded creatures and are the lowest group of animals among the vertebrates. Amphibians begin their life in water, stay there for a certain period and then come to land. There are 5,145 species of amphibians in the world, of which 204 are found in India. Of the 330 genera of amphibians only 30 are found in India.

The concentration of amphibians is more in the north-east region and in the western ghats. Very few amphibians live close to human habitat. North-east India is home to 54 species of amphibians. These species can also be found in Burma, China and South-east Asia.

* The giant tree-toad

The amphibians found in India can be classified into 1) species that can be found only in the north east; 2) species found only in the western ghats; 3) species common to both the north east and the western ghats.

The Himalayan Newt has been placed on the endangered species

* Laboratory study of rare species helps to preserve wild life.

list of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act. It is known to exist only in Darjeeling, Sikkim and Manipur.

India has only one species of Salamander. It occurs only in few pockets. The Malabar tree toad found in the Malabar hills in Kerala and the Garo tree toad found in Garo hills in Meghalaya are also on the decline.

* Indian pond turtle has fallen prey to ecological degradation.

Amphibians are of great scientific and economic importance. They prey on larve and adult insects that destroy fruit and vegetation. Pests of cultivated crops and vectors of diseases are also the main food of these amphibians.

A fall in amphibian population will mean a fall in agricultural yield. Modern agricultural technology has adversely affected our eco-system. The indiscriminate use of pesticides and artificial fertilisers has caused significant changes in the quality of water. Amphibians spend the sensitive part of their life in water. The natural habitat of the amphibians - the wetlands, has been drastically reduced due to urbanisation, industrial development and extensive deforestation.

Indiscriminate capture of frogs for laboratory experiments has also played havoc. Not much attention is being paid to the conservation of these animals. Since 1980, there has been a discernible fall in frog population. A fall in frog population has given rise to mosquito menace since mosquitoes are a staple food of frogs.

Frog breeding centres can monitor frog population by artificial breeding of frogs. Rigid restriction regarding the period of collection of frogs will also help.

* The common newt

Vulnerable forms should be studied in laboratories and saved from extinction.

VELAYUDHAN FEATURES

Lekha was still fuming over the loss of her seat. The worst was, however, yet to come. When the English period ended the teacher called Lekha aside and said:

"Lekha, you are in the NSS, right?"

"Yes, Miss."

NSS is the abbreviation for National Service Scheme. The students participated in various social works. They regulated the traffic; they cleaned the slums and volunteered to help in medical camps.

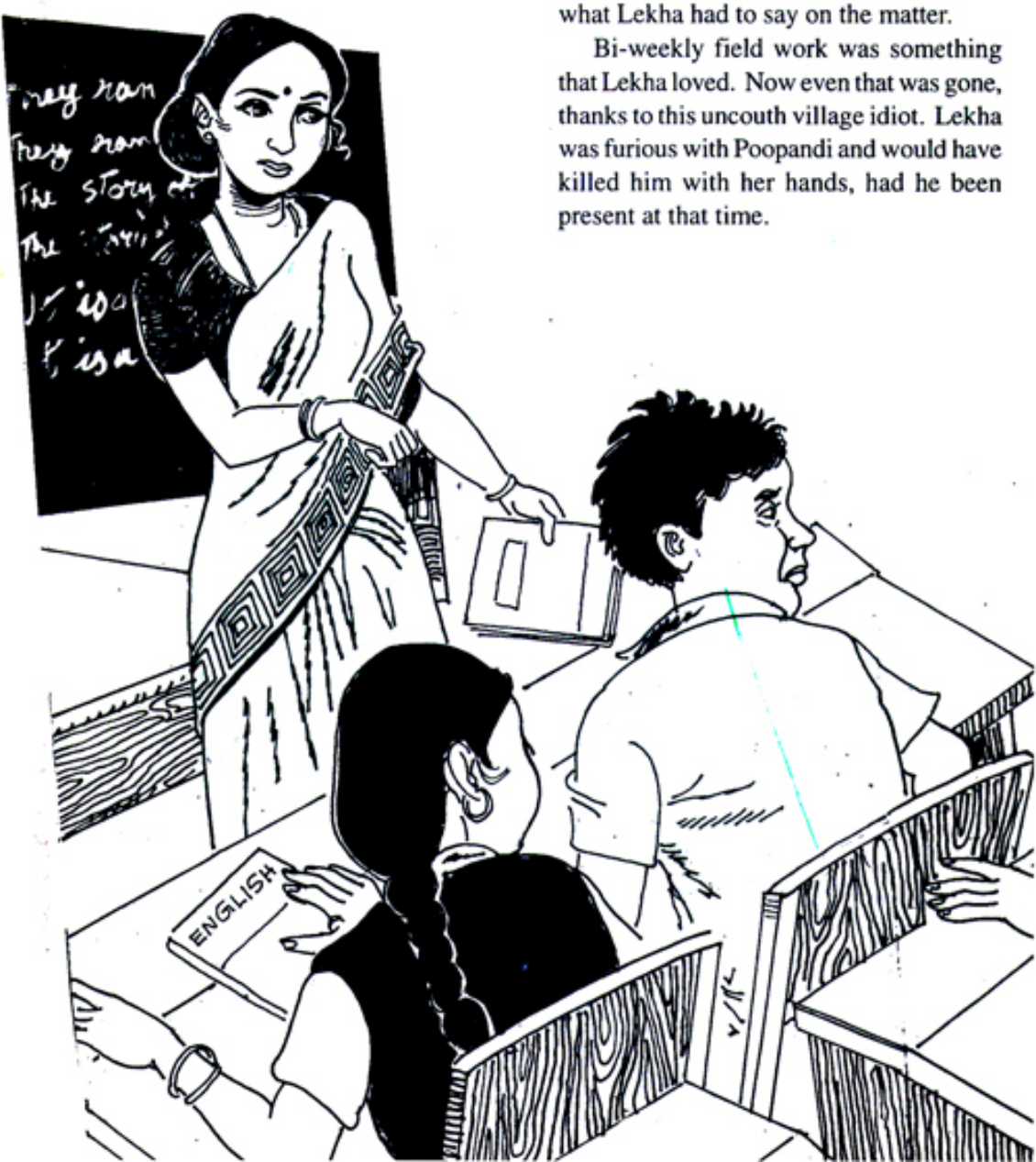
"Lekha, you need not attend your bi-weekly field work in NSS for the rest of this term. Instead, you can teach Poopandi to speak English. OK?"

"Miss?"

"This is not my wish, but HM's order. You will be given full credit for this work. To help your classmate is the best possible social work. Isn't it?"

The teacher did not even wait to hear what Lekha had to say on the matter.

Bi-weekly field work was something that Lekha loved. Now even that was gone, thanks to this uncouth village idiot. Lekha was furious with Poopandi and would have killed him with her hands, had he been present at that time.



THE VILLAGE BOY

As Lekha's ill-luck would have it, she had to teach Poopandi English that same afternoon. The headmistress came over and directed Lekha and Poopandi to an empty class room. She instructed Lekha as to the method of teaching spoken English and left them alone.

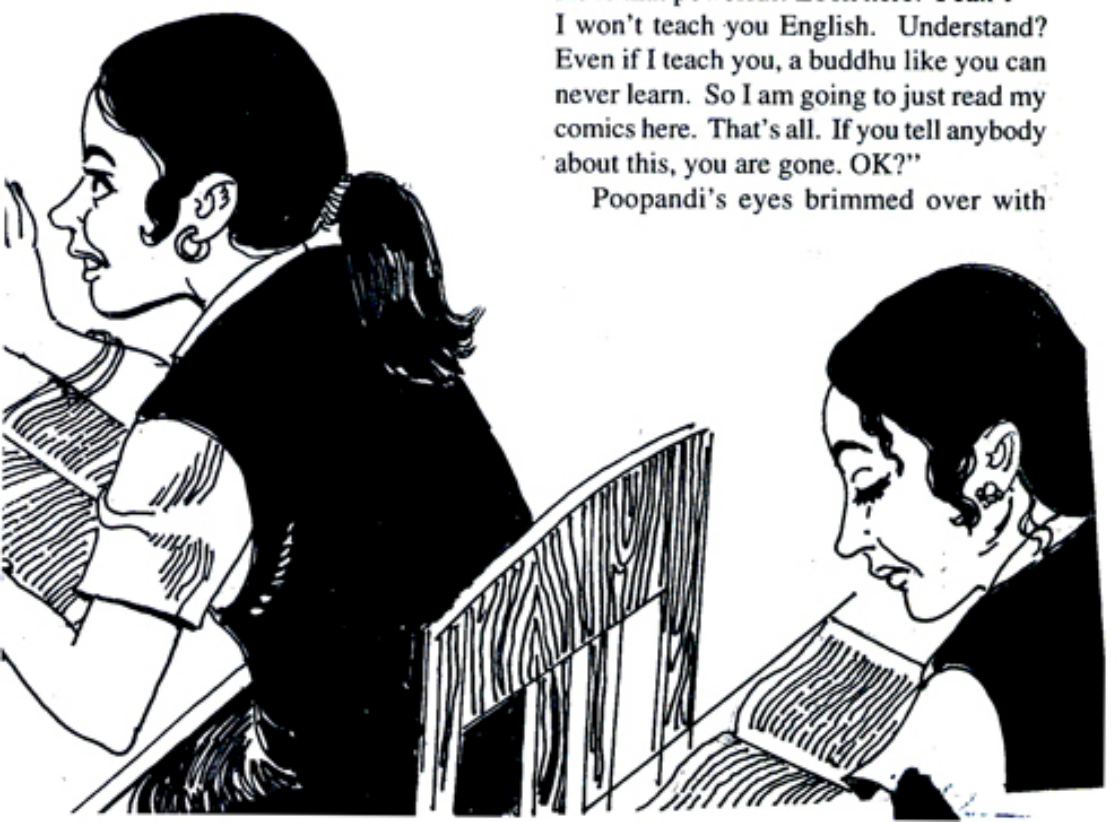
Poopandi looked at Lekha with fear and reverence. The village boy at such close quarters was even more disgusting. She looked around to ensure that nobody was evesdropping.

Then she mounted an attack on the helpless Poopandi. "Why should a boy like you come to this convent? Why do you need to learn English? English is for the gentle and the urbane. You... you... you could have stayed back in your village and looked after the buffaloes there. Why have you come here? To torture me? uh...."

Poopandi stood speechless, stunned by such scornful words and unconcealed hatred. He stared at her in total disbelief.

"Hey bumpkin, why are you staring? Your dad might be a big businessman and might have donated tons of money. Otherwise how could a boy like you be admitted to a convent like this and that too two months after the academic year has begun? Don't think that my dad is an ordinary person. Do you know who he is? He is an IAS officer in the State Education Department. If he were to issue an order to close down this school, then off the school would go! He is that powerful! Look here. I can't — I won't teach you English. Understand? Even if I teach you, a buddhu like you can never learn. So I am going to just read my comics here. That's all. If you tell anybody about this, you are gone. OK?"

Poopandi's eyes brimmed over with



tears. Without a word he calmly collected his belongings and started to leave the room.

Lekha snapped her fingers. Poopandi turned back puzzled.

"Now listen you buddhu, you cannot go now. If you are seen outside, the HM will suspect me. So sit down and look at the ceiling for an hour. And then get lost. This will be the routine for every English class in future. Understand?"

Poopandi returned to his seat and sat down.

One day Lekha brought a tube of very powerful adhesive to the class. It was the maths class. The teacher was writing on the black board. Lekha nudged Poopandi's shoulders.

"Please Poopandi, Arthi has taken my maths notebook. Can you go get it? Make sure that the teacher doesn't notice you. Please."

Poopandi was all smiles because Lekha had spoken kindly to him. "I will be back with the notebook in a jiffy." He whispered to Lekha and the next second he was before Arthi's desk asking for Lekha's notebook. Arthi was puzzled. She had never borrowed Lekha's notebook!

Meanwhile, Lekha spread the adhesive on Poopandi's bench. Poopandi rushed to his seat and in his anxiety to sit down before the teacher turned to the class, he did not notice the adhesive. The moment he sat down, he realised that he had been trapped by Lekha.

Just then the teacher finished writing and turned to the class. She saw the distress in Poopandi's eyes and wondered if he was upto some mischief. She posed a simple question and asked Poopandi to give the answer. Poopandi started to get up, but could not move. He blurted out the answer in incoherent English without standing up.

Lekha nudged Poopandi and said loud enough for the teacher to hear, "Poopandi whenever the teacher asks something, you should first stand up and then answer".

This was enough to provoke the teacher. She shouted at Poopandi. "You should know manners even before you learn mathematics."

Poopandi could not reply to this. He was in tears. Lekha was struggling hard to suppress a laugh. The teacher thought it best to let matters rest when she saw Poopandi in tears.

Just then the bell rang. Poopandi in his anxiety forgot all about the adhesive and wanted to run out of the class as fast as he could. His trousers gave way when he got up. He heard the cloth tear.

To his utter dismay he saw that a portion of his shorts that had been ripped off, was stuck to the bench. When the class saw his bare back, it roared with laughter. Poopandi ran as fast as he could, covering his rump with his bag.

Lekha called out to him mockingly, "Mr. Poopandi, you have forgotten a portion of your trousers. Shall I bring it for you?"

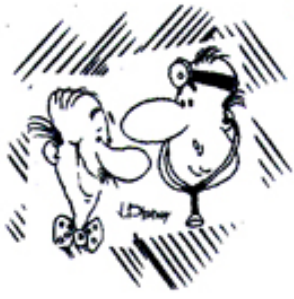
There was another round of laughter.

To continue

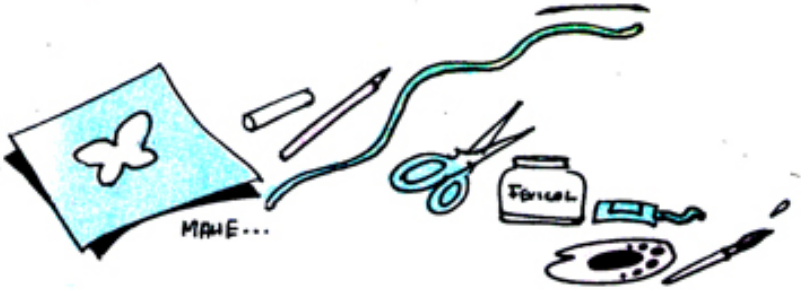
R. Shreedharon, Madurai.

Doctor : Does your teeth chatter due to fever?
Patient : I don't know. I should look in my cupboard where I left it!

Pallavi Prasad, age 14,
Bangalore.



CREATIVE CORNER



A BUTTERFLY THAT FLIES

You need :

Stiff yellow paper;
a small tube;
a nylon string 2m long;

a pencil;
scissors;
fevicol;
paint and brush.

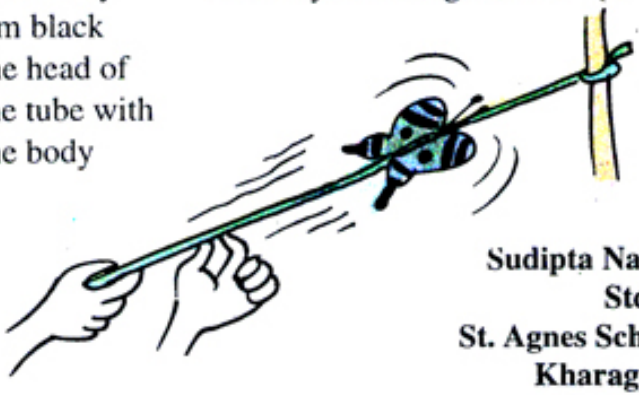
Procedure :

Fold the paper into two. Sketch the design of half a butterfly. Cut out the shape. Open the paper. Paint the wings of the butterfly.

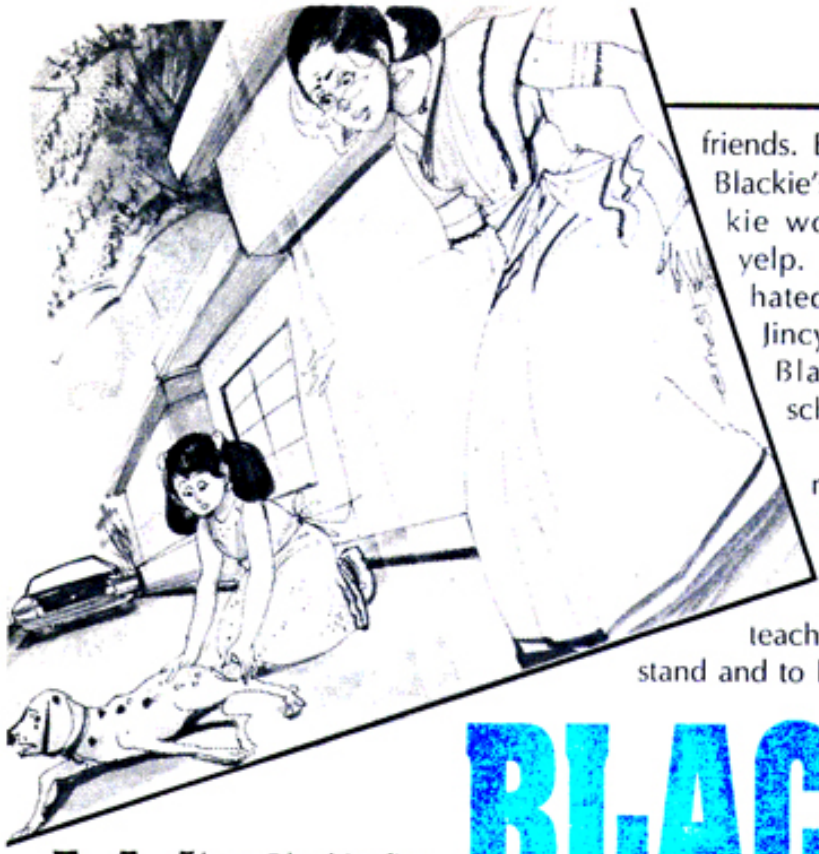
Cut out antenna from black paper and paste it to the head of the butterfly. Cover the tube with paper and paste it to the body of the butterfly.

Pass a string through the tube and fasten one end of the string to a pole.

If you pluck the end of the tightly held string the butterfly's wings will flutter. If you hold the end tight and undisturbed it will appear as if the butterfly is resting on a string.



Sudipta Nandi,
Std. V,
St. Agnes School,
Kharagpur.



BLACKIE

When Blackie first came home, he was a one-day old puppy. Jincy had found the abandoned pup near the street corner.

At first she wondered if she should take it home. She was sure if she left it there it would come under the wheel of some vehicle. She brought it home. It had black spots on its body. So, Jincy named it Blackie.

Jincy's mother frowned when she saw the puppy. Soon, however, she brought out Ezhil's discarded feeding bottle. Ezhil was Jincy's two year old brother.

Jincy fed milk to Blackie. Blackie was given a cardboard box and a few rugs to keep him warm. Within a few weeks, Blackie was exhibiting his bioisterous nature.

Blackie and Ezhil were great friends. Even if Ezhil pulled Blackie's ears or tail, Blackie wouldn't growl or yelp. Sometimes Jincy hated their closeness. Jincy could play with Blackie only after school hours.

One day Jincy's mother advised her to teach Blackie to obey her orders. So, Jincy began to teach the pup to sit, to stand and to listen to her every command.

A year rolled by. Jincy was playing with Ezhil in the garden. Ezhil noticed that the gate was open and rushed to the gate. Alert Blackie noticed Ezhil and ran behind him.

Jincy who saw this ran out to stop Ezhil from running out of the gate. She heard a screech of tyres and a dog howled as if in pain.

Jincy was shocked to see that the driver had run over one of Blackie's legs. Jincy yelled at the driver. "Can't you see where you are going?"

The driver said curtly, "Teach your dog to keep off the road." Poor Blackie was in pain but it had saved Ezhil. Jincy's mother took Blackie to the vet. His wound was dressed and his leg was placed in a cast.

A few weeks later the cast was removed but Blackie limped. One day Jincy's mother asked her to take care of the house and Ezhil. She said she had to visit an aunt at the hospital. She didn't expect to be back till late in the night.

"Blackie will be on guard," she said patting the dog on his head. Blackie barked as if in response to mother's command.

"I have asked Mrs. Roshan to look after you. So if you need anything call her," mother said to Jincy.

Ezhil began to play with his toys. Jincy had finished her homework and now sat back to watch TV.

At 8 pm the door bell rang. It was Mrs. Yadav's servant wanting to use the phone . The phone in Mrs. Yadav's house was out of order.

"I need to make an urgent call. Please let me in."

Blackie growled. "It's ok, Blackie. It's only Mrs. Yadav's servant," Jincy said.

But Blackie would not stop barking. Mrs. Yadav's servant brought out a bone which he threw into the kitchen. Blackie bounded to the kitchen. The man then bolted the door.

He then went to the phone and spoke into the receiver for some time.

When he had finished making the call, he turned to Jincy and said, "Come on, hand over the keys to the almirah. Don't try to shout. Even your dog can't help you."

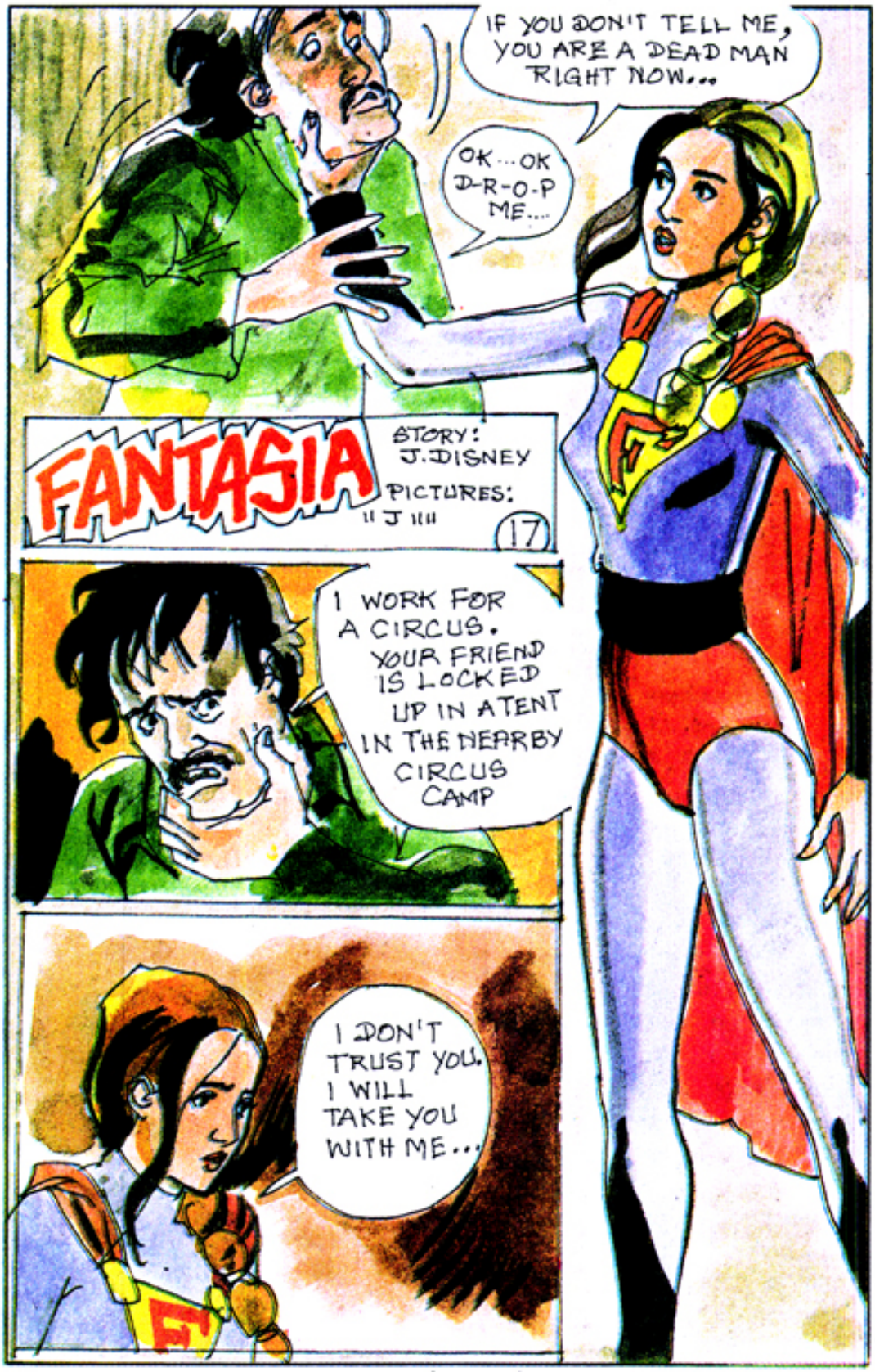
Jincy handed over the keys. The man went to the almirah and began searching for valuables. Jincy waited only for a minute. When she noticed how engrossed he was in his search she tip-toed to the kitchen door and opened it. She whispered into Blackie's ear, "Keep still until I say 'go'. When you hear me say 'go', pounce on the man and pin him down."

The man gathered all valuables he could find and walked into the hall.

"Go, attack him Blackie, go" yelled Jincy. In a trice, the man was on the floor. Blackie held on to the thief's shin. His teeth bit deep into the flesh. The man yelled in pain.

The noise brought the watchman to Jincy's house. Jincy had recovered enough courage to call the police. Everyone praised Jincy's quick-wittedness but Jincy attributed it to Blackie who had helped her pin the thief down.

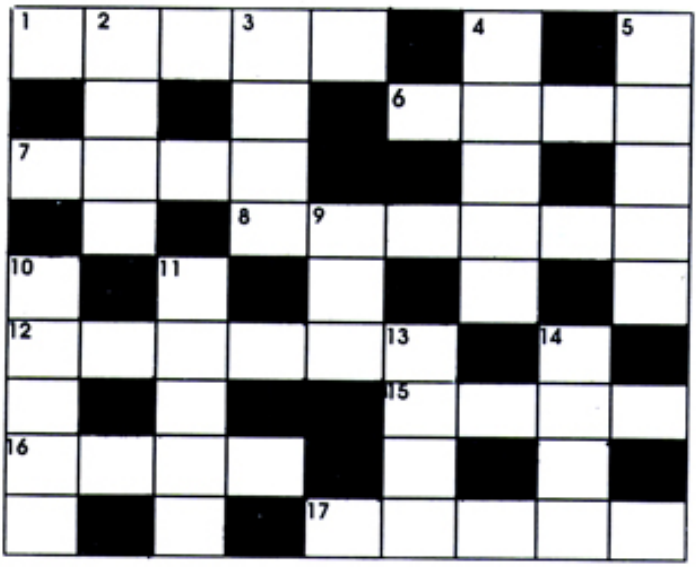
D. Johnson, VIII C,
KV No. 2, Chennai.


IF YOU DON'T TELL ME, YOU ARE A DEAD MAN RIGHT NOW...
OK...OK D-R-O-P ME....
FANTASIA
STORY: J. DISNEY
PICTURES: " J "
17
I WORK FOR A CIRCUS. YOUR FRIEND IS LOCKED UP IN A TENT IN THE NEARBY CIRCUS CAMP
I DON'T TRUST YOU. I WILL TAKE YOU WITH ME...

FROM ABOVE ~
THERE MADAM!
HOPE YOU'LL SPARE ME
JUST AS SHE LANDED-
THUD!
THE MAN FAINTED
FREEDA QUICKLY STARTED WALKING ACROSS TO THE CIRCUS CAMP

PUZZLE PAGE

CROSSWORD



Clues Down

2. Shower (4)
3. Explosive device (4)
4 A pit fot the dead (5)
5. Separate (5)
9. Terminate (3)
10. Scatter by accident (5)
11. Award (5)
13. Nobleman's title (4)
14. Knotted (4)

Across

1. Clan of forest dwellers (5)
6. Let go of (4)
7. Movie (4)
8. Dam building animal (6)
12. Procession (6)
15. Operatic song (4)
16. Idle (4)
17. Open space in a wood (5)

V. Sirisha, age 14, MMHS, Secunderabad.

SPOT THE ADVERTISEMENTS

These are the signature lines. Spot the ads.

1. Nothing official about it —
2. Zing thing —
3. Always the best —
4. World's envy India's pride —
5. The pen the world prefers —
6. The bike with no problem —
7. I want my thunder —
8. Secret of Sachin's energy —
9. Extra energy —
10. Fridge a ———— play it cool

G. Madhumathi, age 15, Chennai.

'GEO' QUIZ

Do you know the names of these places?

1. The two major islands of NewZealand.
2. The city of 'magnificent distances'.
3. The 'island of pearls'.
4. This city is situated on Long Island.
5. The 'land of thousand lakes'?
6. The 'land of lillies'.
7. It was known earlier as Siam.
8. The land of 'midnight sun'.
9. It is called the 'white city'.
10. The largest desert in Australia.

J. Rohini Raj, Std. VIII
KV, IIT, Chennai.

Spot 12 festivals in this grid.

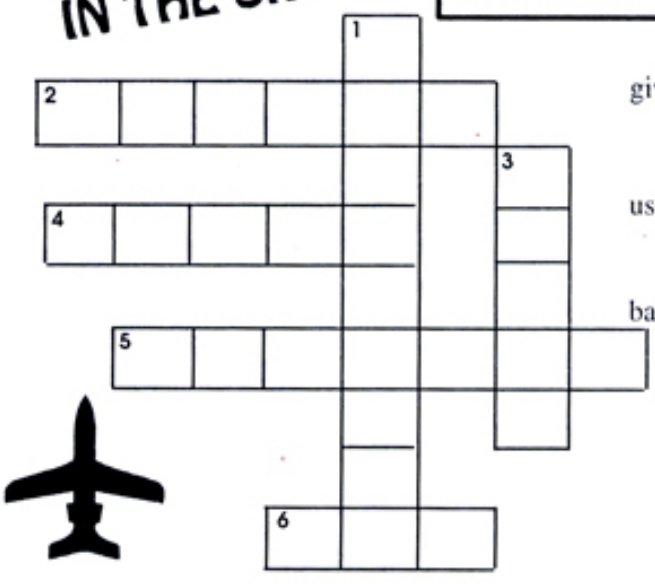
ANSWERS ON PAGE 43

Clues : 1. Moharram 2. Holi 3. Nagpanchami 4. Pongal 5. Diwali 6. Onam 7. Easter 8. Coconut day 9. Gokulashtami 10. Christmas 11. Baisaki 12. Dassera

K	A	I	I	S	C	H	A	C	H	E	P	I	I	C
M	A	M	U	T	R	I	A	P	A	A	A	M	I	O
T	A	A	R	O	O	P	O	T	A	S	A	A	A	C
M	N	I	D	O	E	O	M	U	S	T	C	M	B	O
A	U	M	U	L	S	N	E	B	H	E	A	A	H	N
R	M	A	U	C	U	G	W	S	A	R	H	P	A	U
R	B	H	U	M	O	A	A	I	L	I	C	B	I	T
A	E	C	O	O	M	L	A	L	M	H	S	H	Y	D
H	R	N	I	N	U	Y	A	A	L	K	A	A	A	A
O	A	A	L	K	D	O	N	W	E	A	J	I	K	Y
M	L	P	O	L	O	O	R	I	Y	R	R	J	I	I
A	A	G	H	I	T	O	H	D	A	D	D	Y	E	S
M	S	A	M	T	S	I	R	H	C	J	A	J	I	J
A	O	N	I	D	A	S	S	E	R	A	U	L	U	B

Nila K. Hariharan, Std. VI,
Mahila Samiti Eng. School, Thakurli.
Dear Nila, pl. send your house address.

IN THE SKY



Fill up the boxes with the clues given below.

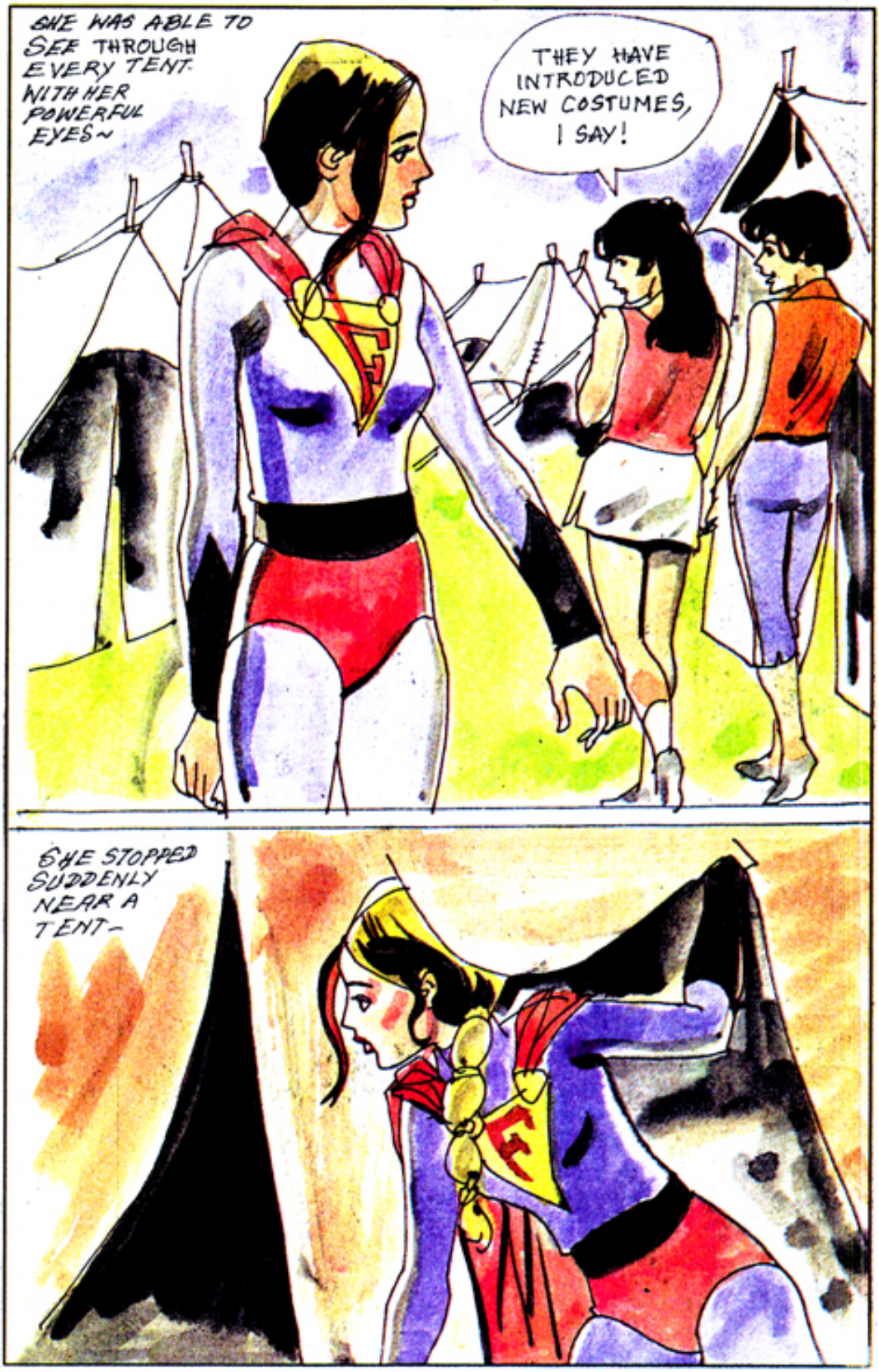
Across

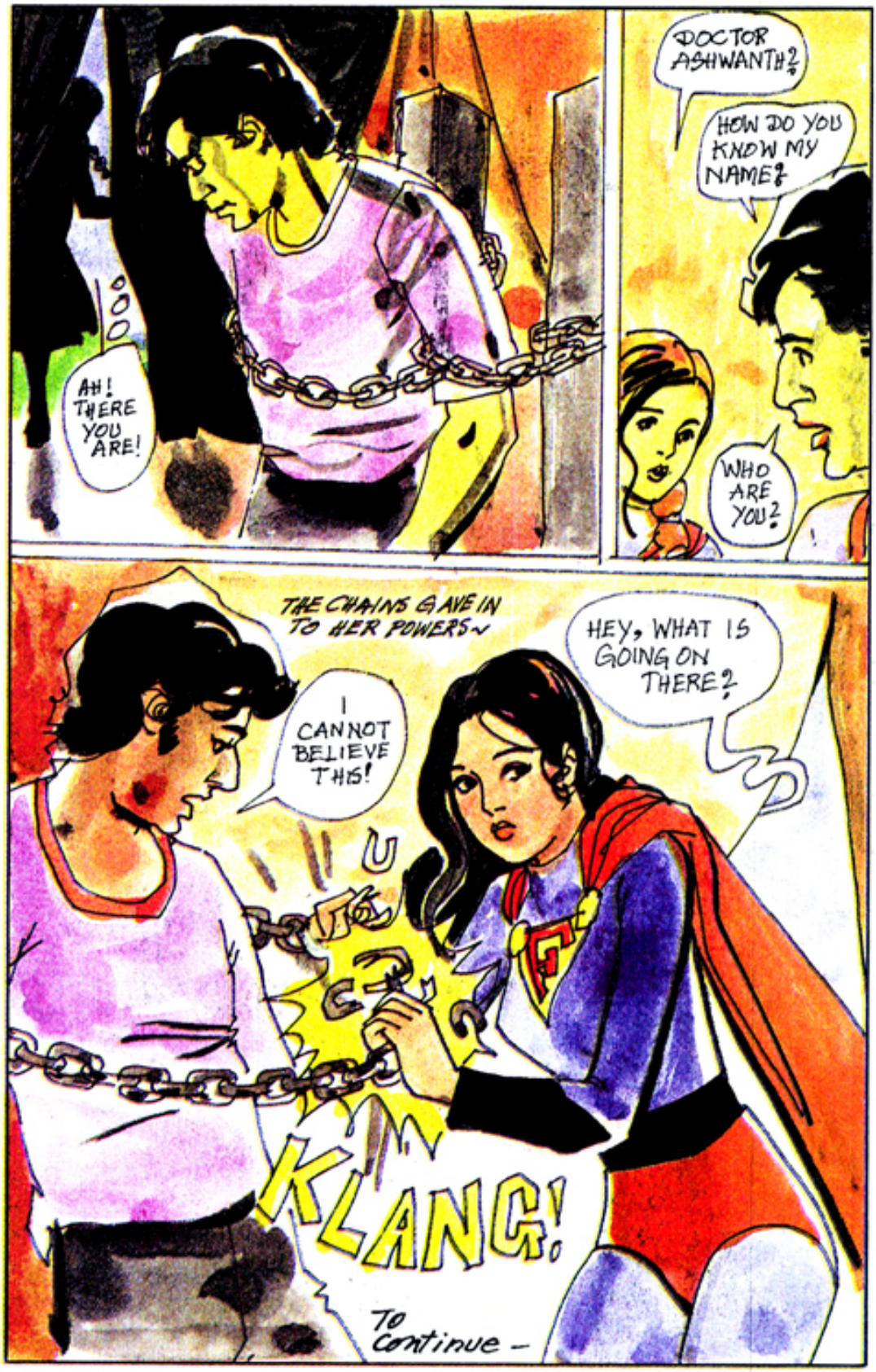
2. This aircraft has no engine and uses wind power.
4. An extra-large aeroplane
5. A big bag of hot air with a basket beneath
6. You'll go fast in one of these

Down

1. Another name for an aircraft
3. This person flies the plane.

R. Sravanthi and R. Sravan,
Std. XI & VIII, Vizag.


SHE WAS ABLE TO SEE THROUGH EVERY TENT WITH HER POWERFUL EYES~
THEY HAVE INTRODUCED NEW COSTUMES, I SAY!
SHE STOPPED SUDDENLY NEAR A TENT-


AH! THERE YOU ARE!
DOCTOR ASHWANTH?
HOW DO YOU KNOW MY NAME?
WHO ARE YOU?
THE CHAINS GAVE IN TO HER POWERS~
I CANNOT BELIEVE THIS!
HEY, WHAT IS GOING ON THERE?
KLANG!
To continue –

Marks versus education

Our edcuation system gives more importance to marks than to learning. Syllabus must be covered fully. Knowledge is given the back seat. Children memorise answers and do not pay much attention to learning the subject thoroughly.

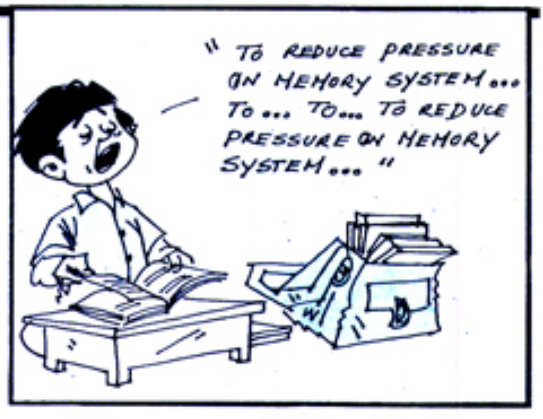
Students of higher classes find it difficult to complete their syllabus in time. As a result they fail in exams. Failure to perform leads students to commit suicide.

In some countries students are given project works. This helps students to learn a subject thoroughly. Couldn't our education system also follow this?

Eric Xavier, age 15,
OLPS HS, Mumbai.

Why homework?

If teachers didn't give homework, we'd probably not study at home. Asking students to memorise lessons at home won't yield much result. By the time the teacher checks out if every student has studied the previous day as advised by her, she



would have run out of time. Besides, she would have lost forty valuable minutes.

I don't think S. Krithika (Aug. '99) is right when she says homework should be banned. Homework ensures that we learn our lessons thoroughly.

We cannot compare schools of the ancient days with modern-day schools. Each class in today's school has 35 students and each student has to understand what the teacher teaches. This makes homework a necessity.

Anandita Chatterjee, Std. IX,
AECS - II, Hyderabad.

What is education?

Education helps the mind to grow and develop. Education helps to build good character in the long run. Real education teaches a child the values of life. Education must teach a child to grow up to be a good citizen. He learns to be prudent and help the society. He develops courage, patriotism, sympathy, selfless service, loyalty, cooperation, tolerance etc. Education trains young minds to excel in the chosen pro-

fession. It teaches the student to put to work his mind and use his hands to express the talents in him.

V. Hitesh, Std. VI B,
B.V. Reddy SSS,
Chittoor.

Women's education

Smitha Jaiswal (Sept. '99) has mis-understood me. (July '99) Women are not being treated as shoddily as they were at the beginning of the century. In any state in India they have a better deal today. Many of them have contributed to our nation.

Men do work as hard as women. Women in villages are not sent to school because they don't need that kind of education. Women and men in the farms need to be taught to increase farm yields. Men and women in the cities and towns should also be taught to improve their manual skills.

White collar job oriented education is not good for boys or girls either in villages or cities.

R. Nivas, XII E,
BHEL MHSS, Trichy.

Who is a politician?

Not very long ago, three professions were very popular — law, medicine and engineering.

Politics was the profession of the wealthy. In today's world all this has changed. In a democratic country, the poor and the rich, the literate and the illiterate are all in the profession!

An aspiring politician must be conversant with his country's political setup and its needs besides having a strong desire to serve the country unconditionally.

Today's politician is a separate 'species'. He smiles and grants favours before elections but disappears after election. If a politician can play the game of politics diligently, then even this profession can be noble.

It is not enough for a politician to be an able administrator. His ideals, integrity and selfless work must also reflect the ambitions and the aspirations of the people he represents.

Such a politician can help develop a country.

V. Ashok, age 13,
Poorna Prajna Education Centre,
Bangalore.

THE BRAVE

Grandmothers are always full of stories. Sitamma is a different kind of granny. If you ask Sitamma for a story, she will recall an incident from her life. The incident would actually make a good story.

When Sitamma married thatha at the age of 14, she was a novice as far as cooking went. Their marriage which took place 60 years ago, was held a week before the dushera festival.

Both Sitamma and thatha were thrilled about the festival. But for different reasons. Sitamma loved clay dolls while thatha was excited because he would get a variety of sundal* to eat each day.

A day before the ten day festival, Sitamma cleaned the house and decorated it with colourful festoons, kolams and lamps.

She arranged the dolls in twelve rows. She even laid out a park. Everyone in the house praised Sitamma's work.

"Bale, bale," said thatha's mother.

"Sabbash", said thatha's brothers.

"First class," said thatha's sisters.

Sitamma was pleased.

Thatha merely said, "Hmmpf, Okay, but I'll accept the 'kolu'* is good only if Sita makes sundal". And then added, "Sita, I want sweet sundal when I return from work".

Sitamma was aghast She knew how to make simple dishes like vegetable curry and rasam, but making sweet sundal! Thatha had five brothers and four sisters. In addition there were three servants. Every dish had to be made in huge quantities. Each day, a minimum of 60 dosais or 70 idlis were made for the family during breakfast. Imagine making sundal for such a big number! Sitamma was worried but didn't want others to know.

She wanted only praises from all members of the household. She wanted to hear the "Bale bale, Sabbash and first class" once again. Who knows, they might even say some more pleasant things, thought Sitamma. So she said, "I'll make the

* A delicacy made from pulses

* Where dolls are placed in rows during dushera.

sundal. You just tell me where to find the items for sundal."

So thatha's mother said, "Velu will show you our storeroom."

Velu was the head servant. He looked after the four cows and it was also his responsibility to keep the storeroom clean. He took Sitamma into the dark storeroom. Huge clay pots were arranged in rows. Velu asked, "What do you wish to take from here, amma? I'll help you."

Sitamma didn't know what to do next. But she wanted Velu to think that she could manage. So she said, "Velu, what makes you think I can't find my way here? I can find what I need, you may go now". So Velu left.

COOK

Sitamma thought hard. 'Sweet sundal should have some jaggery - so let me look for jaggery first'.

The storeroom was really dark. Rats scurried about. Slowly Sitamma opened the pot and something leapt out!!!

Sitamma screamed. It was a tiny lizard. Phew! Luckily no one heard the scream. The room was so dark and scary that Sitamma began to imagine that the clay pots were actually pigmy demons.

'Jaggery. Let me find some jaggery', she prayed. Sitamma searched a few pots and finally found jaggery. She collected five big lumps.

Next, she needed pulse to make the sundal with. She remembered having eaten a greenish sweet sundal the year before. So it has to be a green coloured pulse. She

searched high and low but couldn't find what she wanted. A room adjoined the storeroom. She entered the room and opened the first pot. What luck! The pot contained the green coloured pulse! Actually the pulse looked brown. But Sitamma thought it was because of the room's darkness that the pulse looked brown. Pleased, she filled her vessel with the pulse.

Sitamma was so relieved to come out of the room that she did not even bother to check the colour of the pulse. She soaked the pulse in water. It would be ready for cooking in another five-six hours. then she powdered the jaggery. She decided

to rest for a while before cooking.

Poor Sitamma! She didn't know that she had soaked kollu which is used to feed cows. Had Velu been with her, he would have warned her that the room adjoining the store-room contained cow-feed. Sitamma, unaware of this mix-up, had dreams of tasty sweet sundal.

When Sitamma went into the kitchen, she was surprised to see Velu peeping into the vessel containing the green pulse.

"Velu, what are you looking at? It's the dhal for making sundal" said Sitamma with pride.

A shocked Velu wailed, "Ayyayyo, it is kollu. We feed it to the cows. How can you make sundal with this?"

Sitamma covered her face with her hands. "Velu, what will I do now? Thatha will be back any moment. There is no time to soak the green pulse. Everybody will laugh at me if they get to know. I wish I had taken your help. Velu what do I do now?" cried Sitamma.

The kind Velu did some fast thinking. He said, "Sitamma, don't worry. When my children get worms in their stomach, I give them bitter gourd juice. But I mix it with ginger and jaggery to disguise the bitterness. We will disguise the kollu and make a superb sundal out of it."

Velu gave instructions and Sitamma followed them.

"Steam kollu till it becomes very soft" Velu said.

Sitamma obediently did so. The kollu sundal was coming out very well when thatha's mother entered the kitchen.

"Velu what are you doing inside the kitchen! Shouldn't you be feeding the cows?" exclaimed thatha's mother.

"Yes amma. I shall go right away. I just wanted a piece of coconut to set the mouse trap, I am just going" said Velu and left. But before

GOD MADE ALL THINGS

God made all things
Which include human beings,
Who have destroyed nature
Because they wanted to get richer.

If we don't stop destroying trees,
We cannot live a life of ease.
We must save our environment,
Else, we may have to lament.

Aurea D'Silva, age 14,
Milagres Eng. Med. HS., Udupi.

Dear Anurea, pl. send your house address.

leaving he slyly indicated to Sitamma that he'll come back.

"Is the sundal ready? Can I take a look?" asked thatha's mother.

"No-no. I'll call you when it's ready amma, you please go and rest" said Sitamma hurriedly.

So thatha's mother left.

Sitamma was impressed with Velu's culinary abilities.

Without Velu she felt helpless. But there was no time to waste. She had to hurry.

Sitamma remembered what Velu had said, "If you put all tasty things together, the dish has to taste good too". Yes! so the best thing would be to put all the delicious items like jaggery, coconut and cardomom together.

Feeling confident, Sitamma first drained the excess water from the cooked kollu. She then added jaggery. Then she added the cardomom powder.

Mmmm! It was already beginning to smell delicious. Then Sitamma began to add the scraped coconut when she heard a knock on the kitchen window.

It was Velu. He held out a small packet. "Amma this is green food colouring powder. Add it to your sundal and it will become green. Nobody will know. Mmmm! It smells delicious" said Velu and quickly left before anyone saw him.

Sitamma was grateful to Velu. He was so kind to her though she had been rude.

But for Velu, she would have been the laughing stock of the entire household! A humbled Sitamma proceeded to finish the kollu sundal.

Can you guess how Sitamma's sundal turned out?

It was simply superb. Nobody even thought that anything was wrong with it.

"Bale, bale" said thatha's mother.

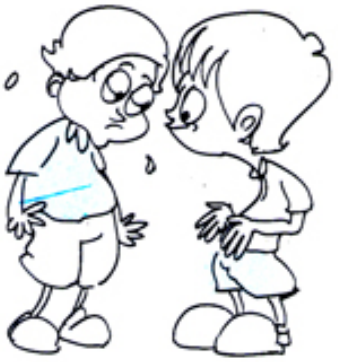
"Sabbash" said thatha's brothers.

"First class" said thatha's sisters.

And do you know what thatha said? "Sita, I have never tasted a better sundal in my life. Your sweet sundal is even better than your kolu and park!"

Only Velu and Sitamma did not touch the sundal.

Jaya Madhavan, Chennai.



Ramu : If a train travels 14 kms in 30 mins., what is my age?

Shyamu : 42 years.

Ramu : That was simply fantastic. How did you guess that?

Shyamu : Oh! That's very simple. My neighbour sometimes makes such wise cracks. He's 21. Since you always make such remarks you ought to be 42!

S.Yasaswini, age 14,
DAV SSS, Chennai.

A group of Mayan residential buildings, part of the Indian city of Uxmal

MAYANS-A LOST CIVILISATION

The Egyptian, Greek, Indus valley and Chinese civilisation are 5000 years old. The Mayan civilisation of South America is comparatively young, but it offers an insight into the lives of people who lived amid the rainforests. Sometime before 250 AD, the first Mayan culture created one of the most brilliant civilisation in the Yucatan peninsula of South America.

The Mayans, like the Egyptians built pyramids. They carved giant figures on stones. When archeologists escavated the remains of Mayan civilisation they were surprised by these people's intellect and artistic works. The remains proclaim the Mayan's artistic and intellectual abilities. The Mayan empire spread to five main South American countries - Mexico, Brazil, Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala.

A 3000 year old stone face

The Mayan empire which lasted for six centuries had nobles, priests, scribes, artists, warriors and craftsmen besides farmers. The people were ruled by heriditary dynasties. These dynasties claimed to have divine ancestry.

Historians believe that the Mayan culture collapsed following poor agricultural yields and changes in climate. At the peak of the civilisation, there were probably 16 million people.

The Mayan culture was wiped out totally after the invasion by Spaniards in the 16th century.

By the end of the 17th century even the few remnants of the post classic period (900 - 1500 AD) were erased.

The Spaniards expanded trade routes and a new society took root. In the process they destroyed an entire civilisation. There are still a few descendents who speak Mayan languages.

Their population has dwindled to four million. Over the years these people have become Roman Catholics but they continue to share ancient myths and practise rituals.

Y. Balaji, Std X,
St. John's MS, Salem.

HISTORY

WINNING WAYS

Above the din of the early morning traffic, a passerby could hear the shouts of boys, the bang of doors and the sound of footsteps as the boys climbed up or down the stairs of the hostel.

All was not well with the boys of this hostel. It housed boys from all religions in the country. Every dormitory had an assortment of boys. There were Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and Sikhs.

Raju and Naseer shared the same dormitory. Neither boy talked to the other. Though quite a few boys in the dormitory knew of the unpleasant relations between the two boys nobody ever talked much about it.

One day matters became worse when Raju and Naseer began hurling abuses and stones at each other. This happened in school but the fight was carried over to the hostel too.

The boys came to blows. The warden intervened and warned the boys to behave. However, the matter did not end there. A few days later, Raju and Naseer fought over who would use the bathroom first. Again both the boys began calling each other names. The warden took up the matter with the headmaster.

The headmaster spoke at length to both the boys. It was then he realised that the boys held a poor opinion of each other's religion. The headmaster decided to put to rest the boys' disagreement.

The HM told the boys to concentrate on studies rather than in such frivolous matters as religious differences. He gave them examples of men who had left indelible impression on mankind irrespective of their religions.

Raju and Naseer apologised and promised to reform their ways. The next year saw Raju and Naseer team up for the annual sports meet. The boys brought glory not only to their school but even to their parents and friends.

T. Subha, age 12,
Fatima MHSS,
Chennai.

Dear Subha,

Pl. send your house address.

ANSWER PAGE

K	A	I	I	S	C	H	A	C	H	E	P	I	I	C
M	A	M	U	T	R	I	A	P	A	A	A	M	I	O
T	A	A	R	O	O	P	O	T	A	S	A	A	A	C
M	N	I	D	O	E	O	M	U	S	T	C	M	B	O
A	U	M	U	L	S	N	E	B	H	E	A	A	H	N
R	M	A	U	C	U	G	W	S	A	R	H	P	A	U
R	B	H	U	M	O	A	A	I	L	I	C	B	I	T
A	E	C	O	O	M	L	A	L	M	H	S	H	Y	D
H	R	N	I	N	U	Y	A	A	L	K	A	A	A	A
O	A	A	L	K	D	O	N	W	E	A	J	I	K	Y
M	L	P	O	L	O	O	R	I	Y	R	R	J	I	I
A	A	G	H	I	T	O	H	D	A	D	D	Y	E	S
M	S	A	M	T	S	I	R	H	C	J	A	J	I	J
A	O	N	I	D	A	S	S	E	R	A	U	L	U	B

SPOT THE ADVERTISEMENTS

1. Pepsi
2. Gold Spot
3. BPL
4. Onida
5. Reynolds
6. Suzuki
7. Thums up
8. Boost
9. Bournvita
10. Kit Kat.

12 FESTIVALS

1 T	2 R	I	3 B	E		4 G		5 A
	A		O		6 D	R	O	P
7 F	I	L	M			A		A
	N		8 B	9 E	A	V	E	R
10 S		11 P		N		E		T
12 P	A	R	A	D	13 E		14 T	
I		I			15 A	R	I	A
16 L	A	Z	Y		R		E	
L		E		17 G	L	A	D	E

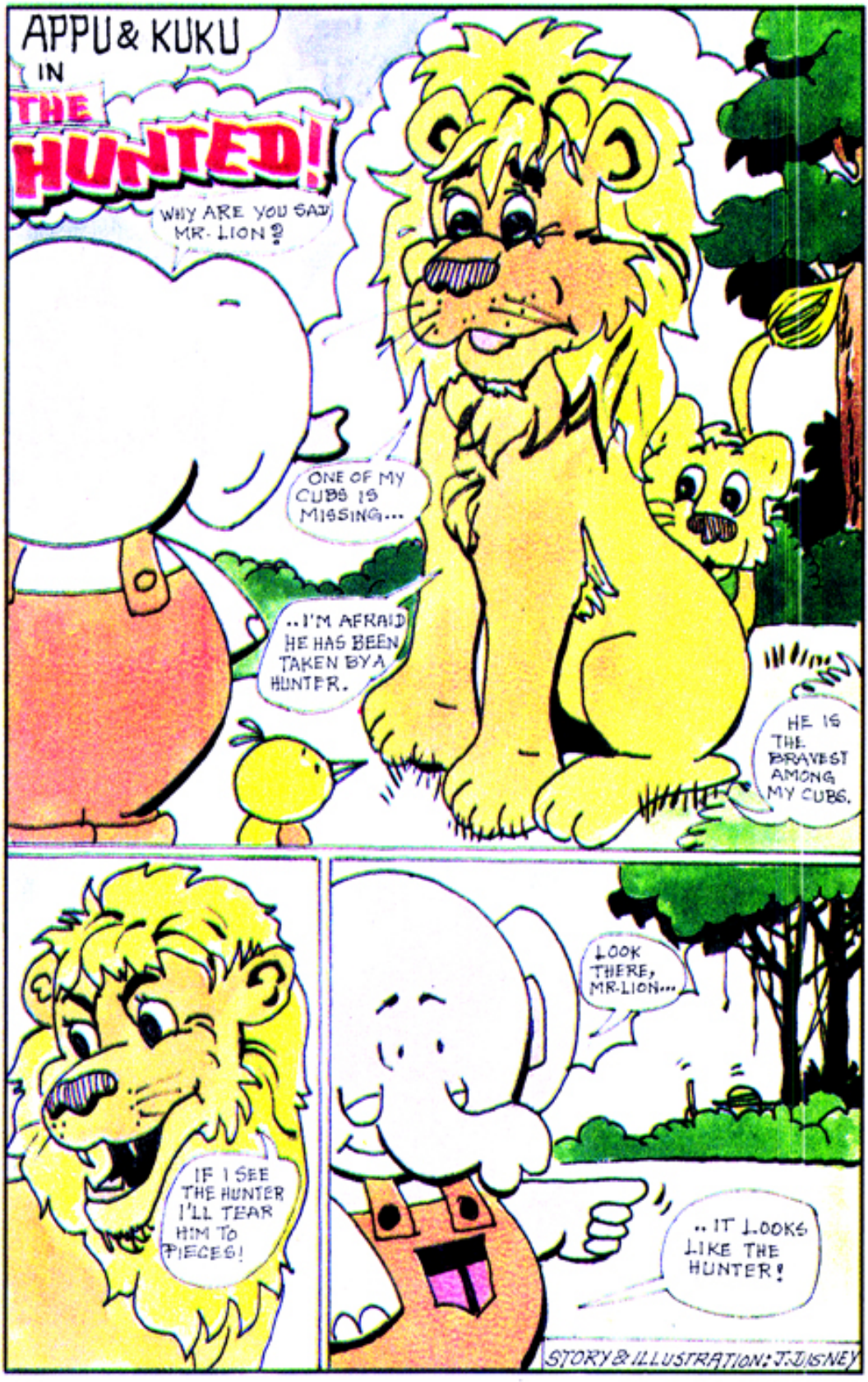
IN THE SKY

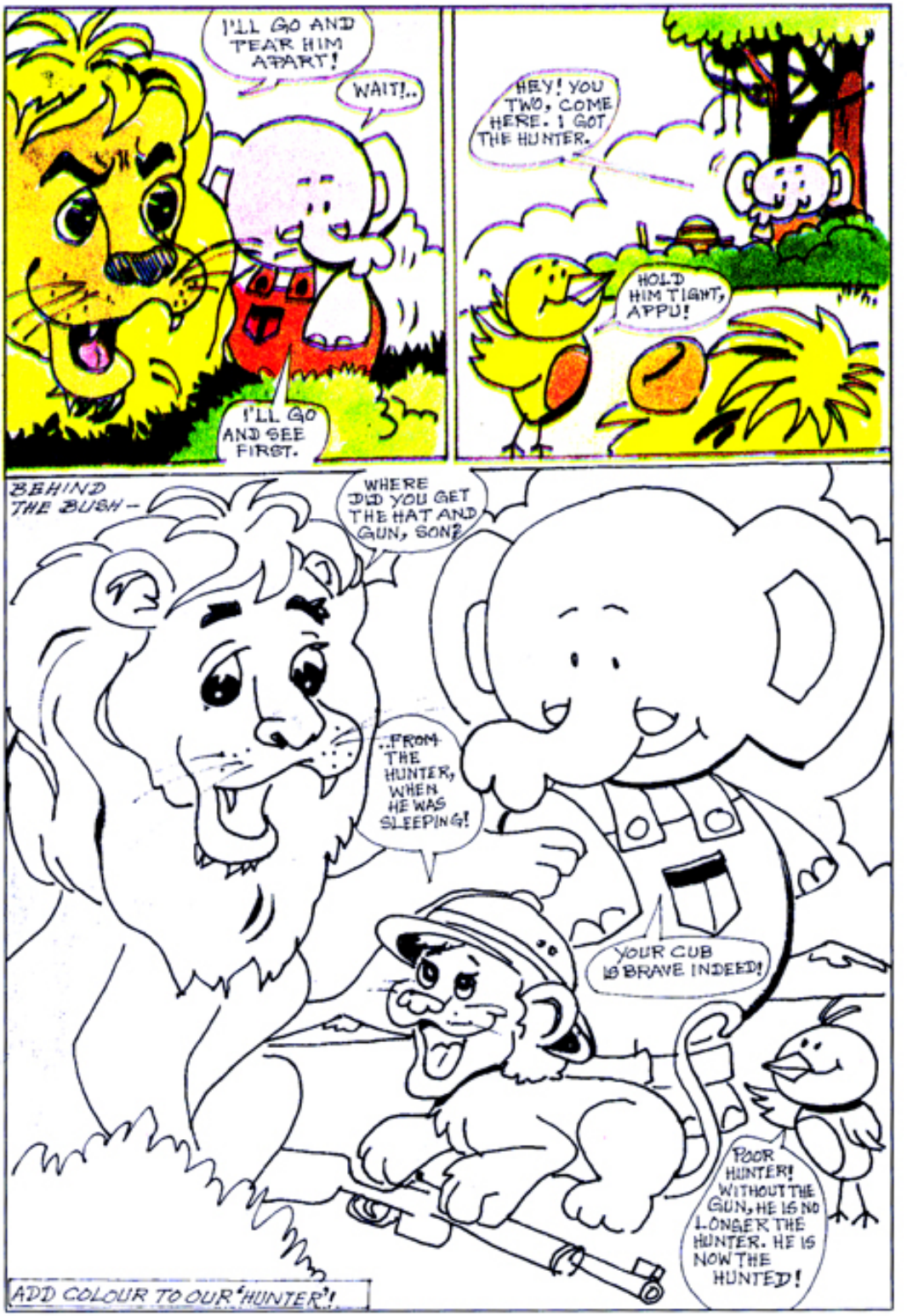
			1 A			
2 G	L	I	D	E	R	
			R		3 P	
4 J	U	M	B	O	I	
			P		L	
5 B	A	L	L	O	O	N
			A		T	
			N			
		6 J	E	T		

CROSSWORD

'Geo' Quiz

1. South Island and North Island
2. Washington D.C.
3. Bahrain
4. New York
5. Finland
6. Canada
7. Thailand
8. Norway
9. Belgrade
10. Great Australian desert.


APPU & KUKU
IN
THE HUNTED!
WHY ARE YOU SAD MR. LION?
ONE OF MY CUBS IS MISSING...
..I'M AFRAID HE HAS BEEN TAKEN BY A HUNTER.
HE IS THE BRAVEST AMONG MY CUBS.
IF I SEE THE HUNTER I'LL TEAR HIM TO PIECES!
LOOK THERE, MR. LION...
..IT LOOKS LIKE THE HUNTER!
STORY & ILLUSTRATION: J.DISNEY


I'LL GO AND TEAR HIM APART!
WAIT!..
I'LL GO AND SEE FIRST.
HEY! YOU TWO, COME HERE. I GOT THE HUNTER.
HOLD HIM TIGHT, APPU!
BEHIND THE BUSH –
WHERE DID YOU GET THE HAT AND GUN, SON?
..FROM THE HUNTER, WHEN HE WAS SLEEPING!
YOUR CUB IS BRAVE INDEED!
POOR HUNTER! WITHOUT THE GUN, HE IS NO LONGER THE HUNTER. HE IS NOW THE HUNTED!
ADD COLOUR TO OUR 'HUNTER'!

EXPERIENCE

Art on wall

It was a week before Diwali. While we looked forward to the festival, my classmate Lokesh suggested that we decorate the class room for the occasion.

Accordingly Lokesh brought to school a number of bits of colour paper on the day before the hols.

He chewed the bits and pasted them on the wall just before leaving school in the evening. We thought the walls looked beautiful.

A week later the school reopened. Our teacher who walked into the class noticed the decorations. She wanted to know who had decorated the walls.

Lokesh stood up and said proudly, "I did it."

If he had expected praise then he was disappointed. The teacher said, "clean the walls, now." So much for his idea! Lokesh spent quite some time cleaning the walls.

B. Mukund, Std. VI B,
KV, Chennai.

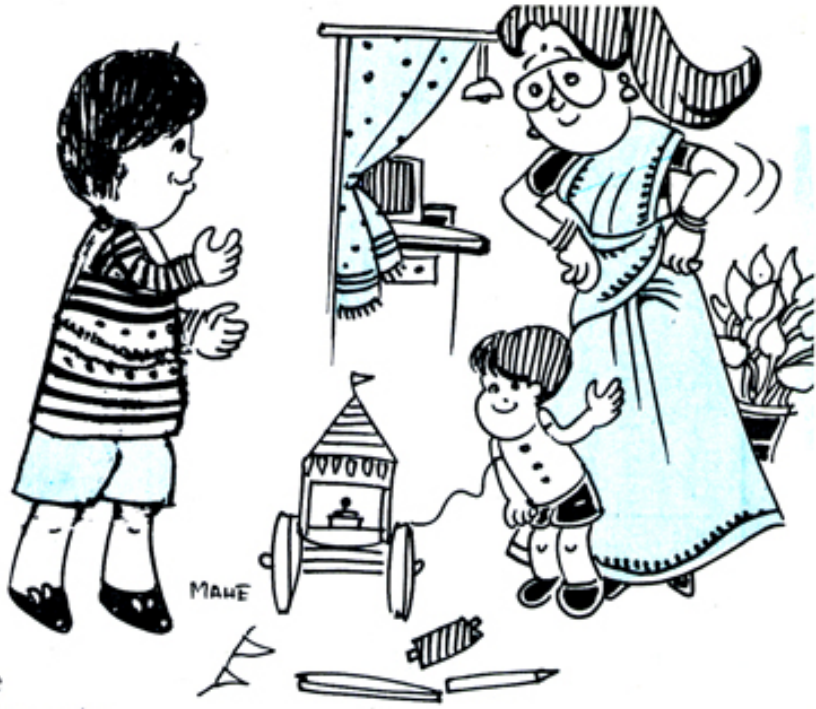
LOCKED!

I was seven when this happened. We came to Madras to spend our holidays. On the day my parents and I were returning by the evening train to Secunderabad, I decided to spend some time with my cousin.

My aunt had to do some urgent shopping. She locked us up saying she'd be back in an hour's time.

When it was time to leave, my parents who stayed with

ONLY ONCE



It was the 'rath yatra' day. My brother and I were cleaning the wooden rath and decorating it.

My mother who happened to notice us told me to study for the physics test which was due the following week.

I told my mother that I needed a break from studies for some time. She would have none of it and insisted that I should get back to my studies.

My brother who had been silent all along now said, "But mummy, rath yatra comes only once a year. Brother can make up for the lost marks in the next test."

My mother smiled at this. But I had to get back to studies.

K. Padmanabhan, Std. VII A, Calcutta.

Dear Padmanabhan, pl. send in the name of your school.

---

an aunt nearby realised that I was missing. They decided to find out if I was with my cousin.

They found me with my cousin but I was locked up! My parents tried to locate the keys but they couldn't. Since there was no time to locate my cousin's mother, my father broke open the lock. I was relieved to be with my parents. My aunt had been held up in the market, we later learnt.

T. Anandavalli, VI C, KV, Secunderabad.

MY CHACHA

"Thatha, thatha, my teacher has given an assignment. I can't make any sense out of it," cried Radhika as she entered the house one Friday evening. Radhika went to the Highway School. She was in standard III.

"What is it Radhu? your teacher must be really clever to extract work from me, besides giving you some homework," said Ragavaiah, Radhika's grandfather.

"Thatha, the teacher has given us a grid to solve. I'm not worried about myself. I have you to help me with it. But what will Saritha do? She doesn't have educated grandparents like me. Her mother is only a vegetable vendor," lamented Radhika.

"Now, forget about the assignment and wash up," said Sundari patti, Radhika's grandmother. "Then have something to eat and drink up your milk. I'm sure we'll be able to help Saritha too when we come to know what it is all about."

Radhika told them about the upcoming Children's Day celebration in school. The teacher had given a short talk on Jawaharlal Nehru. The grid that she had given standard III was too difficult for that class. That is why Radhika was worried not only for herself but also for her classmate.

On Saturday, Radhika brought Saritha home and they had breakfast together. Then thatha narrated the story of Nehru.

Thatha ended the story saying, "Nehruji wrote letters to his daughter Indira from jail. He wrote at length about the history of human civilisation. The book is called 'Glimpses of World History'. He wrote another book called 'Discovery of India'.

"Thatha, discovery means to find out, to know", interrupted Saritha.

"Very clever girl" said Thatha.

"Continue thatha, your story is very interesting" said Radhika.

"I too want to join the story-telling session" said Deepak who had just

walked in. He was Radhika's brother.

"Go along," said grandmother, "I will join you after finishing work in the kitchen."

Just then came Devaki, Saritha's mother. She was on her way to the market. When she saw the children with Ragaviah, she said, "Sami, you must take up a job as teacher at Highway School. The children will adore you."

"Yes, yes, Devakiamma, the entire school will adore thatha," the children chorused.

"Saritha, stay here till I come back from the market. Don't cross the highway alone," Devaki told her daughter and left.

"Where did I stop children?" Ragaviah asked.

"Thatha, Nehru mama wrote books from jail, you said. It is difficult to remember their names," said Saritha.

"Ah. Indira's mother fell ill and died. Indira was a young girl then, but older then you children."

"Thatha, was she pretty?" interrupted Radhika.

"Very, Radhu. She was also bold you know" Sundari patti joined the group.

"Indira studied in Switzerland and in England, but did not complete her education as she wanted to be with her father. She met Feroze Gandhi, a Parsi, while in England and wanted to marry him."

"Thatha, how can you marry your friend? Is it like the stories we see on TV show?" Deepak asked.

"If two people like each other and if their parents agree, there is nothing wrong in getting married. When I was young I liked patti who was our neighbour. Our parents agreed that we suited each other. That is how we got married. Nehru, along with other leaders of India fought for the freedom of the country.

"We became a free nation on the midnight of August 14, 1947. Nehru became the first Prime Minister of India. For the first time the national flag was unfurled from the ramparts of Red Fort at Delhi. People used to come in lakhs to listen to Nehru's speech. I have listened to him once in Chennai when I was a student. He

visited many countries. Many Presidents, Prime Ministers and statesmen of various countries visited India. Nehru loved children and roses."

"Thatha how long was he the Prime Minister of India?" asked Saritha.

"He was Prime Minister for 17 years and he died in 1964" said Sundari patti.

"Patti, you remember dates so well. You should become a History teacher in our school" said Radhika.

"Nehru was given the highest civilian award of Bharath Ratna," said Thatha.

"Thatha, why is November 14, celebrated as Children's Day?" Deepak asked.

"Nehru was born on that day. He was very fond of children. So that day is celebrated as Children's Day," said thatha.

"Thatha, last year my teachers at school distributed chocolates on Children's Day. I wonder what the Highway School will do?" wondered Saritha.

"Saritha, the children of Highway School are asked to bring to school their old but well-preserved clothes. They are then put in a hamper and sent to orphanages in the city. The children of the orphanages and the children of the Highway School put up variety programmes for two hours in the evening," Sundari patti said.

Waiter : Would you like black coffee?
Diner : What other colours do you have?

B. Ramprakash, Std. VII, Jawahar Vidhyalaya, Chennai.

It was children's Day. Deepak and Radhika were up early and were brushing their teeth when the door bell rang. Sundari patti opened the door.

It was Saritha and Devaki, Saritha's mother. Saritha held a rose in her hand. Devaki placed her bamboo basket that overflowed with leafy vegetables on the floor.

Saritha said, "Patti where's thatha? I have to give him this rose."

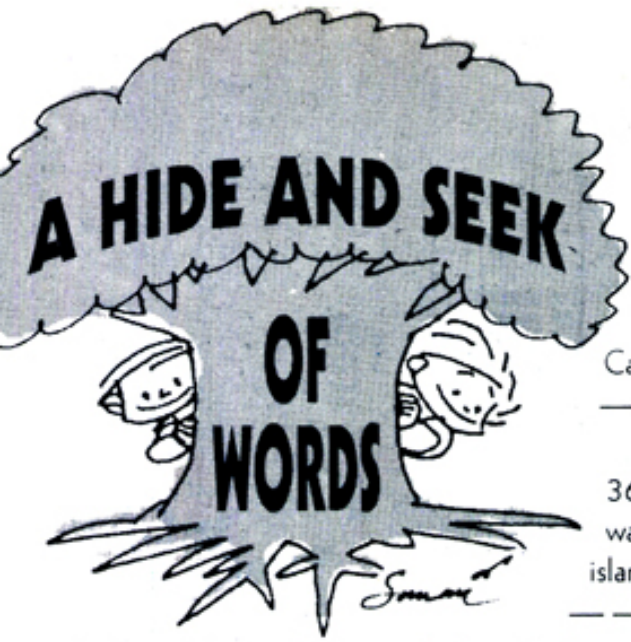
She saw thatha seated on the easy chair, his eyes closed in meditation. She waited till thatha was finished with his prayer.

When he opened his eyes she placed the red rose on his palm and said, "you are my chacha and I want to give this to you."

Thatha hugged Saritha and smiled. Radhika's father who watched this scene quickly brought out his camera and took a photograph of Saritha and thatha.

Soon, everyone was standing together. And Radhika's father took a photograph of the group.

Girija Karthikeyan, Bangalore.



Fill in the blanks.

1. Lord Krishna's Grandson — — — — — — — — — —

2. India is divided into states, Canada is divided into — — — — — — — — — — —

3. When this volcano exploded, 36,000 people were killed and the bang was heard 5000 km away. This is an island volcano in Indonesia. Name it. — — — — — — — — —

4. Antacids generally contain hydroxide of — — — — — — — — — —

5. A character in Enid Blyton's books '*The Famous Five*' is called George by her friends. Her real name is — — — — — — — — —

6. Name the father of the famous cartoon character Dennis Mitchell. — — — — —

7. The substance which leaves carbon as residue on heating is — — — — —

8. The four digit number often known as Ramanujam number — — — —

9. A word describing an action i.e. how it is done: — — — — — —

10. The currency of Malayasia — — — — — — —

11. The highest falls of the world situated in Venezuela is — — — — — — — — — — —

12. 'Jaiphal' is a spice found in India. In English it is called — — — — — —

13. According to Greek legend this fable writer was thrown off a cliff as he had annoyed the citizens of Delphi: — — — — —

14. The study of echoes is known as — — — — — — — — — — — — —

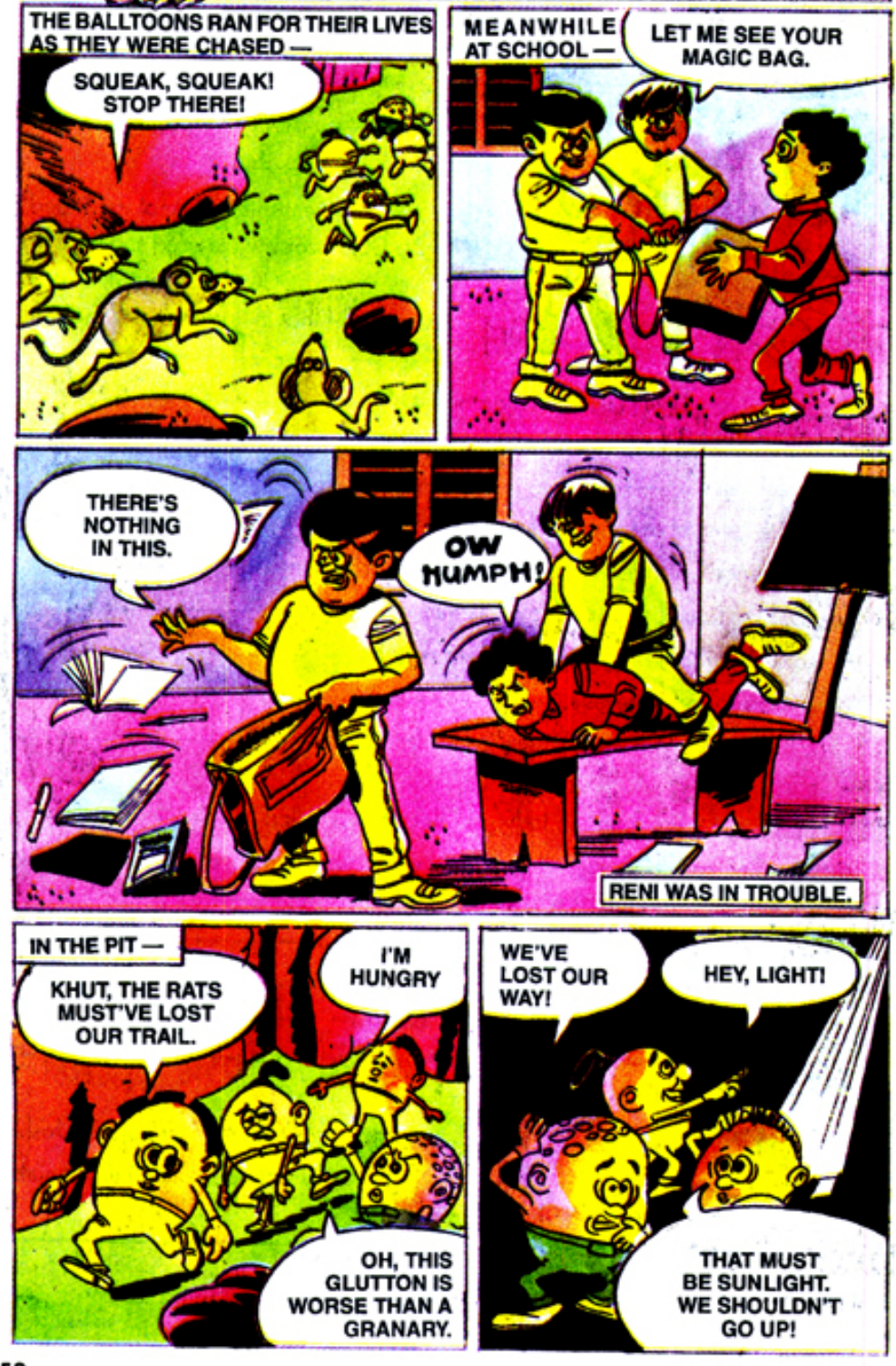
15. A famous novel based on the life of the Scottish sailor, Alexander Selkirk written by Daniel Defoe: — — — — — — — — — — — — — — —

Pooja B. Joshi,
Apeejay School, Jalandhur, Punjab.

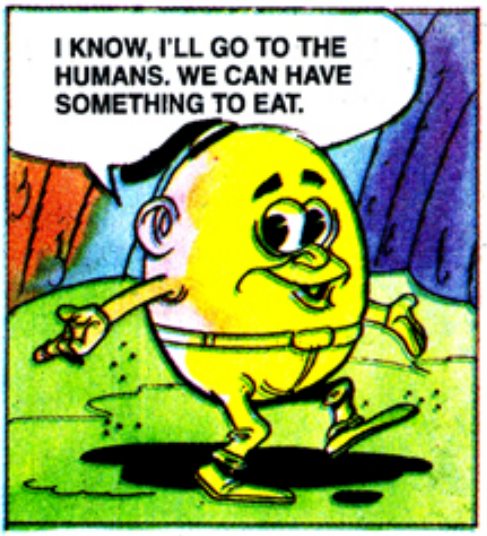
Answers : 1. Aniruddha, 2. Provinces, 3. Krakatua, 4. Aluminium, 5. Georgina, 6. Henry, 7. Sugar, 8. 1729, 9. Adverb, 10. Ringgit, 11. Angel Falls, 12. Nutmeg, 13. Aesop, 14. Catalousitics, 15. Robinson Crusoe.

BALLTOONS

Art : C.J. Roy Script : Chalam 12

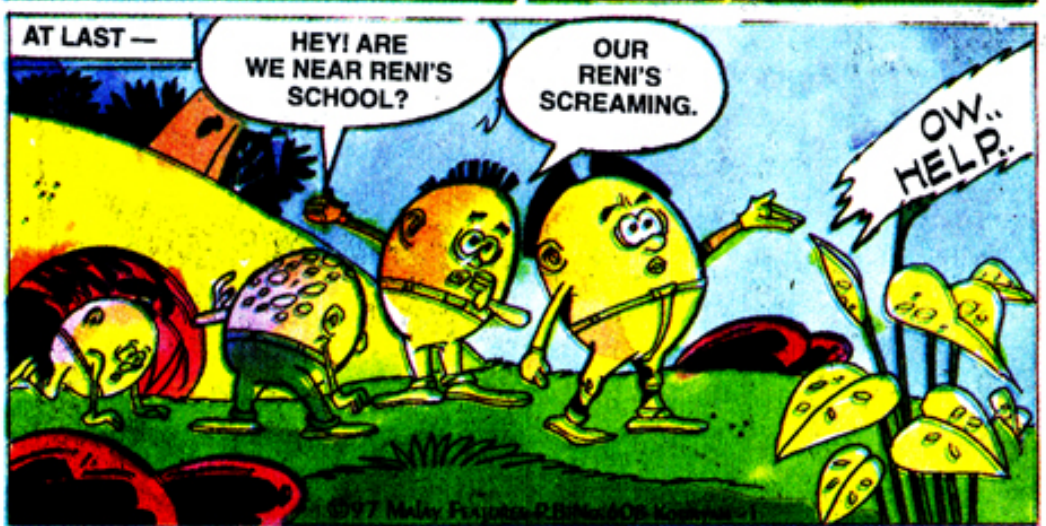


LET'S SEE WHERE IT LEADS!
RATS ON ONE SIDE AND HUMANS ON THE OTHER!


I KNOW, I'LL GO TO THE HUMANS. WE CAN HAVE SOMETHING TO EAT.

THEY CLIMBED UP.
CAREFUL

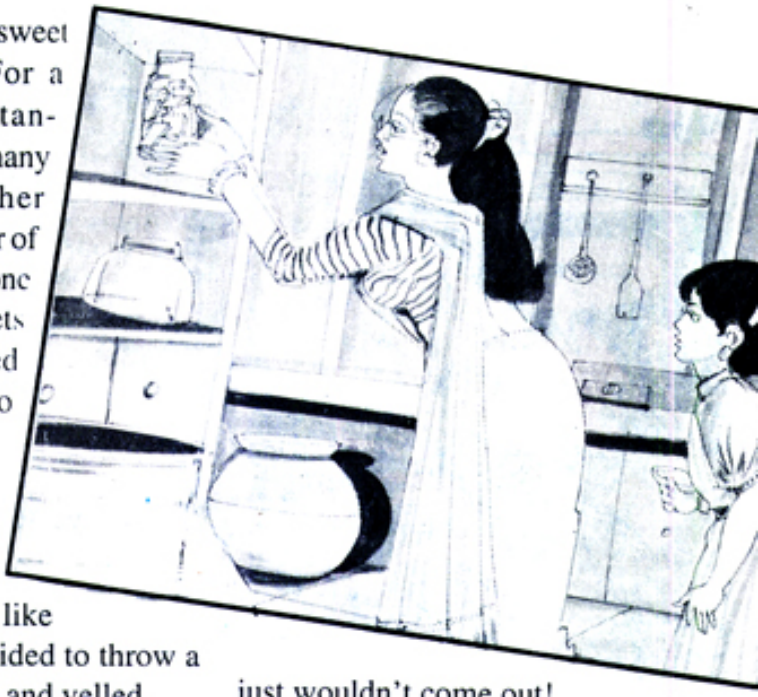
ON YOUR GUARD BROTHERS, THIS IS A RAT'S BURROW. WE'VE TO GET OUT SOMEHOW.


AT LAST —
HEY! ARE WE NEAR RENI'S SCHOOL?
OUR RENI'S SCREAMING.
OW.. HELP..

TO CONTINUE

SOUR SWEETS

Maya had a sweet tooth. For a fourth standard girl she ate too many sweets. Her mother received a gift hamper of sweets from a friend one day. She put the sweets in a narrow mouthed jar and gave just two pieces to Maya.



Maya did not like this at all. She wanted three or four and more if she felt like eating more! She decided to throw a tantrum. She bawled and yelled.

Her mother merely ignored her. This annoyed Maya. Maya decided to eat the sweets no matter what.

That night when everyone had gone to bed Maya tip-toed into the kitchen. She closed the door and switched on the light.

She climbed on to the kitchen platform and removed the jar. She picked up a handful of sweets. But what was this? She couldn't remove her hand. Try as she might her hand just wouldn't come out!

Meanwhile the light in the kitchen had alerted Maya's mother. She remembered switching off all the lights. She alerted Maya's father saying there could be a thief in the kitchen.

Maya's mother knocked on the door. When she received no reply she pushed open the door and was surprised to see Maya.

When Maya's mother saw that Maya's hand was stuck in the jar, she

began to laugh. "The sweets were really sour, weren't they?" her mother asked.

Maya apologised. Her mother applied oil around the rim of the jar and gently removed Maya's hand.

Maya had learnt a lesson. Now she doesn't eat too many sweets either.

Mridula Prabhu,
Std. VIII A,
MIT Eng. Med. School, Pune.

A VICIOUS PREDATOR

Sharks usually live only in the deep oceans. They can be attracted to the shore either by a live bait or even a speared fish.

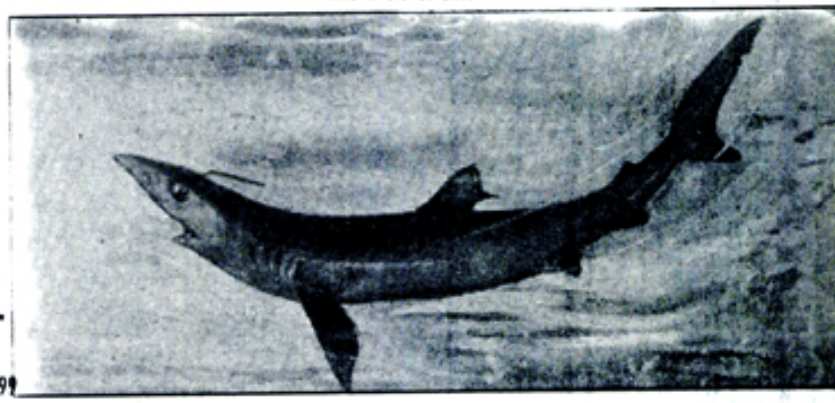
There are many kinds of sharks. Of them, only the tiger shark , the blue and grey shark and the large white shark attack humans. Even the glint of a piece of jewellery or some other article is enough to attract a shark's attention.

Sharks are most likely to attack during day-time. They frequent waters where the temperature is between 16° and 21° centigrade (60° and 70° farenheit). Most attacks occur at about 200 to 300 ft. from the shore where the water is no more than two to three feet deep.

The white shark has no natural enemies. It is a very powerful and aggressive creature.

R. Raghavi, Std. V A,
Prince MHSS, Chennai.

* The Blue Shark



FAIRY MAB

Fairy Mab came at night,
Her eyes so blue, her hair so brown,
With silver spots upon her wings,
From the moon she fluttered down.

She has a little silver wand,
And when a good child goes to bed,
She waves her wand from right to left,
And makes a circle around his head.

Priya R. Kamat, age 10,
Hutching HS, Pune.

Certain symbols are used to denote these words. Do you know them?

1. Peace
2. Progress
3. Surrender
4. Death by hanging
5. Uncle Sam
6. Too much attention to official formalities

WORD GAME

7. A person who gives himself upto indolent enjoyment
8. Revolution
9. Threats and bribes
10. Protest
11. National mourning

L. Padmasini,
Shri Anand Jain Vidhyalaya MHSS,
Chennai.

Answers : 1. Olive branch, 2. Wheel (Chakra), 3. White flag, 4. Gallows, 5. The United States, 6. Red tape, 7. Lotus - eater, 8. Red flag, 9. The stick and carrot, 10. Black flag, 11. Flag flown at half mast.

Our planet

HOW IS WEATHER FORECAST?

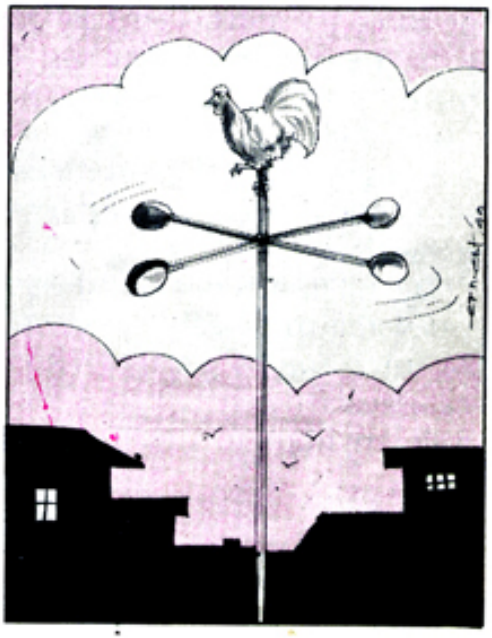
Different elements like temperature, rainfall, wind, sun-shine, air-pressure and clouds make up weather. The weather we experience is a result of a complex series of changes in some or all of these elements.

Since these vital statistics change almost every second, they have to be measured and recorded. A daily record of weather over a long period of time has revealed regular patterns in weather changes. This has helped to predict future weather patterns.

Weather is invisible and ever-changing. So it has been a difficult task to predict weather. Our ancestors predicted weather by watching the sky. They used the position of stars, movements and direction of the wind or animals and birds.

It was Galileo who learnt to use mercury to measure temperature. In the 17th century the first thermometer was invented. A few years later, Pascal, a Frenchman found a way to measure the changing air pressure.

He took a tube filled with mercury up a hill. The height of the column of mercury decreased as it was



*Weathercock

taken higher up and increased when it was brought down. Human hair lengthens in moist air. A small weight tied to one end of human hair made a crude hygrometer. The varying length of the hair indicated a change in humidity. The weather cock gave information about the direction of the winds.

With the advent of electric telegraph information about weather could be transmitted from one place to another. The first weather service station was established in Britain in 1855. Local British papers began carrying brief weather forecasts. Slowly, the number of weather stations increased. This information was not very accurate.

The stratosphere too plays an important part in weather changes. Scientists began to send up hydrogen and helium balloons with instruments attached to them. These weather balloons are still in use. When the geo-stationary satellite was launched in 1960, a breakthrough was achieved.

By 1968, a series of satellites were orbiting the earth. They sent TV pictures to earth. These satellites send photographs every half an hour to earth from a distance of 35,000 km.

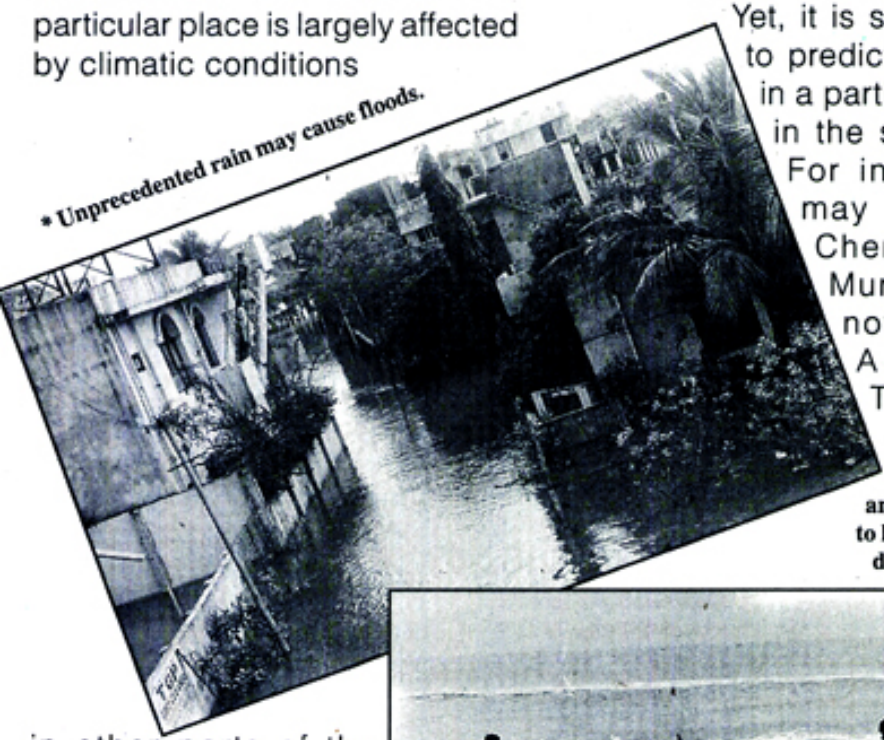
* Weather Balloon

The advent of computers have simplified calculation of data. It would take 64,000 mathematicians a full year to calculate weather qualitatively. Computers can sort out huge masses of data and present them in tables and maps in seconds.

The World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) was set up in 1950. It stores data from world

over and helps countries to share information on weather patterns.

Today storms, tornadoes and cyclones can be predicted three to four days in advance. There are unmanned and manned data collection platforms along coasts and in seas. The weather in a particular place is largely affected by climatic conditions in other parts of the world.



* Unprecedented rain may cause floods.

Despite all this weather forecasts still remain undependable. A twenty-four hour forecast is usually right. A three-day forecast is tricky because weather patterns may shift unexpectedly.

Forecasting the summer monsoon in India has always been a challenge to meteorologists world over. A few decades back countries of the world participated in an experiment called MONEX. This experiment helped to predict the overall performance of monsoon fairly accurately (with +/- 10% error).

Yet, it is still difficult to predict the rains in a particular area in the same city. For instance it may rain in Chembur in Mumbai but not in Andheri! This requires area-specific information about temperature, air pressure, and clouds.

* Fishermen are often advised to keep off the sea during cyclones.

Dr. Poonam Mehra, Mumbai.

It was on a day of fog,
That I saw a dog,
Lying sprawled on a log,
Eyeing a frog.

All of a sudden it started raining,
And the frog started croaking,
It startled the dog body and soul,
And the log started to roll!
I started laughing,
For the frog was scampering —
Away from our sight,
He hid in a puddle so light!

S.L. Nithya, Std. VI C,
SBOA School, Chennai.

THE LAST LAUGH!

My 11 year old brother has few friends of his age. He hangs out with me and my friends. He says that he prefers tougher boys. My advice that he join his friends and classmates falls on deaf ears. Even my parents are worried. What is wrong with my brother? How can I encourage him to be with boys of his age?

S. Arun, age 15,
Chinmaya Vidhyalaya,
Thiruvananthapuram.

Dear Arun,

Your brother may be afraid of peer pressure. He probably feels safe and out of danger with boys older than him. He may also be afraid of being asked to stand up for himself. Ask a few of his classmates to join your group and then leave them to themselves. Your brother will get the message.

I had a friend. She

GRANDMA WORM

suddenly preferred to be seen with another girl. She would seek me out only if her friend wasn't available. I told her I shouldn't be treated like a cast off until she found it convenient to be with me. Did I do the right thing?

T. Saisudha, age 15,
NHS, Calcutta.

Dear Saisudha,

You did the right thing. A true friend does not abandon old friends.

I study in classVII. I prepare well for exams, but when I enter the hall I forget everything.

Harish Nair, age 12,
Ambernath.

Dear Harish,

Give yourself mock tests every week. This way you will overcome your exam fear.

I am weak in maths. I work out all the sums in the book. We do not have mid-term exams. We have class tests. My mother scolds me because I score very low. I also attend tuition classes. I don't forget the concepts, yet, I'm not confident.

N. Krithika,
age 12,
Vidhya Mandir,
Chennai.

Dear Krithika,

There's nothing to fear. If you are thorough with the subject you can face exams anytime. Try giving yourself mock-tests at home. Ask your parents to give you tests.

A girl in my class and I had a fight two years back. She is my 'rakhi' sister. Since the fight we haven't spoken to each other. Now, I want to speak to her and make-up. How do I go about it?

S. Dinesh, Std. XI,
Sri Sankara Vidhyalaya,
Chennai.

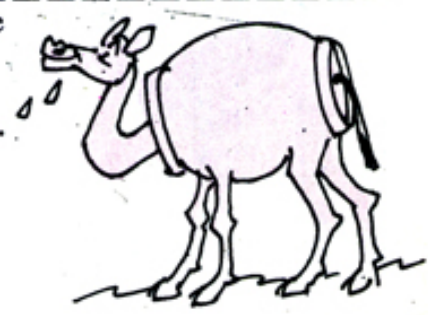
Dear Dinesh,

Fights among classmates and friends are common. You could get her a card. Tell her how sorry you are that you fought with her. Sort out the misunderstandings between the two of you.

Love,
Grandma worm.

Ramesh : Sita, why do people of the desert call the camel as the 'ship of the desert'?
Sita : Because there are no ships in the desert!

Y. Sreya, Hyderabad.



Pl. send your house address.

* Caking mud on the body protects the animal from insect attack.

Why do rhinos take mud baths? All five species of rhinoceros found in the world live in hot tropical regions. The rhinoceros seeks out muddy areas. It likes to wallow in the mud, rolling and flopping about in the slush.

The place that rhinos visit often is called a wallow. Rhinos in the wild and in zoos equally love to wallow in the mud.

The wet mud provides them comfort. It cools the rhino and acts as a protective layer against the sun. The mud also creates a shield against insect bite and parasites that penerate the rhino's skin.

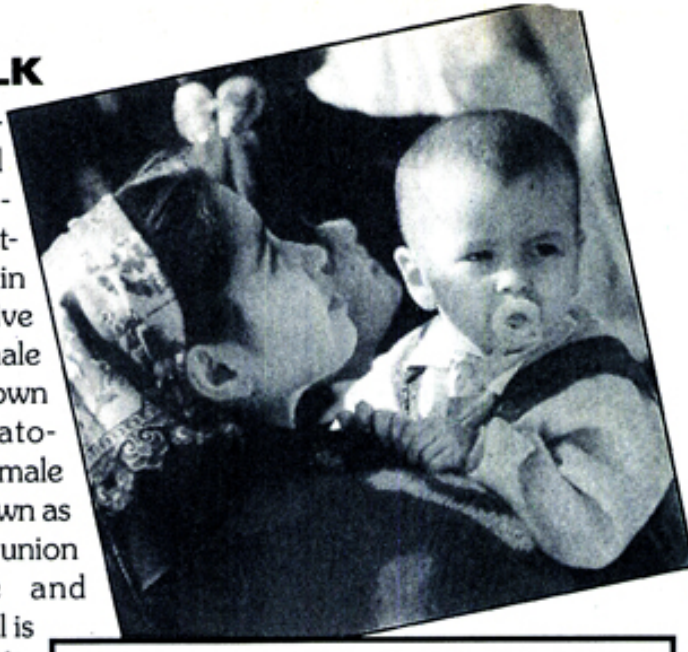
KEEPING COOL

Elephants are also fond of mud. The rhinos, hippos and elephants love to wallow in water to cool their heated body. When water is scarce they wallow in the muddy water. Elephants give themselves mud baths. If the wallow is large enough to accommodate their bulk they will plunge in. If not, they will spray dry mud all over themselves.

W.K. Krishna Jaya, Std. V,
Chinmaya HS, Hyderabad.

* Elephants need to cool off by immersing themselves in water.

REPRODUCTION



The essential differences between sexes is in the reproductive organs. The male germ cell is known as the spermatozoon and the female germ cell is known as the ovum. The union of the male and female germ cell is called fertilisation. The process which brings this about is sexual union or coition.

When the head of a speramatozoon pierces an ovum the ovum is fertilised.

* Major changes that determine adulthood occur during adolescence.

The spermatozoon has three parts — a head, a body and a tail. The head is hard and spear-like, the tail is long and it waves and vibrates continually. The tail withers away after fertilisation.

An ovum is large and is visible to the eye. It is enclosed in a transparent capsule and contains among other things, yolk-granules.

Speramatozoa are manufactured in a pair of glands called the testes. Spermatozoa do not develop until puberty. After puberty, they are secreted in great numbers. The sperm live in a jelly-like fluid called semen. The semen is the richest secretion in the body. It is a valuable source of nutrient to the brain and nerve cells. Sufficient semen, however, is normally left in two

*Until birth, the foetus is connected to its mother's body by means of the umbilical cord.

storage tanks called the seminal vesicles, (which are situated behind the bladder) for an act of coition.

Why does voice break?

Besides semen, the testes also manufactures another secretion. This is distributed by blood and brings about changes in the body that characterises the male.

At puberty the ridges across the forehead become more pronounced. The chest expands and a growth of hair appears on the face and the genital organs.

These changes are called secondary sexual characters. The most distinctive among these is, the breaking of the voice. These changes many occur in the six years of adolescence.

In women the egg cells are produced by ovaries. They are a pair of glands found in either side of the pelvic cavity, lying a little behind the kidneys. The ovaries are attached by ligaments to the wall of the pelvis and to the uterus.

Each ovary has in it a number of rounded bodies of varying size. They are called the Graafian follicles. They surround the ova.

*In boys voice breaks and hair appears on the face after puberty.

Once every four weeks from the time of puberty (until the woman turns forty-five) a Graafian follicle bursts on the surface of the ovary. A ripe ovum is set free.

The ovum is conducted into the fallopian tube. It is then urged into the uterus. If the ovum meets a sperm at this stage fertilisation occurs.

The uterus is a hollow organ situated in the middle of the pelvis. The rectum is behind and the bladder is in front of it. It is shaped like a pear.

The fertilised egg has divided and redivided into a mass of spherical cells by the time it reaches the uterus.

This mass of cells is surrounded by a transparent sac, the amnion, in which the developing foetus floats.

Outside the amnion is a membrane called the chorion. This membrane connects the embryo with the mother.

The blood vessels of the chorion are in close contact with the blood vessels in the wall of the uterus. The blood vessels thicken gradually and are now known as placenta.

The placenta supplies nutriment to the foetus and removes the waste products from the foetus.

What is navel?

When the foetus is fully developed the amnion and the chorion burst. The amniotic fluid that passes out through the vagina makes for easy passage of the child.

The baby is connected to the mother by a narrow tubular part of the placenta. This tube is known as the umbilical cord. This tube has to be cut in order to separate the mother from the child.

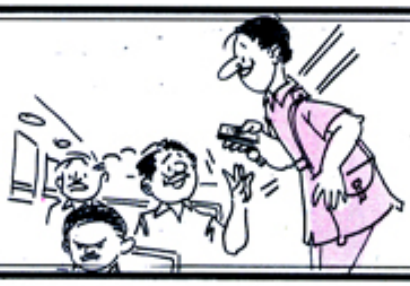
Since this cord contains arteries and veins, it is first tied. A part of the cord remains attached to the child. This part slowly withers and only a fold of skin known as the navel marks the position. All mammals have navels.

Mammary glands

After birth the uterus shrinks in order to expel placenta. The muscles that stretched out during pregnancy also shrink and regain their normal tone.

The mammary glands build up milk granules from nutrients brought to them by the blood vessels. This milk is conveyed by ducts through the nipple which the baby suckles.

A healthy, nursing mother can suckle her child for the first six to eight months of its life.



In a bus -

First person: Wait, please!

Second person: 90kg. sir.

- N. Haveesh, IX A,
V.M.Hr.Sec.School,Chennai.

J. Pavithra, VIII A,
Sri Shanthi Vijay GHSS,
Udhagai.

Dear Pavithra, pl. send your house address.

S. Supriya, X,
Mariyam Nilaya School,
Bangalore.

Gaurav Kumar, age 11,
Govt. SSS, Middle Andaman
Island.

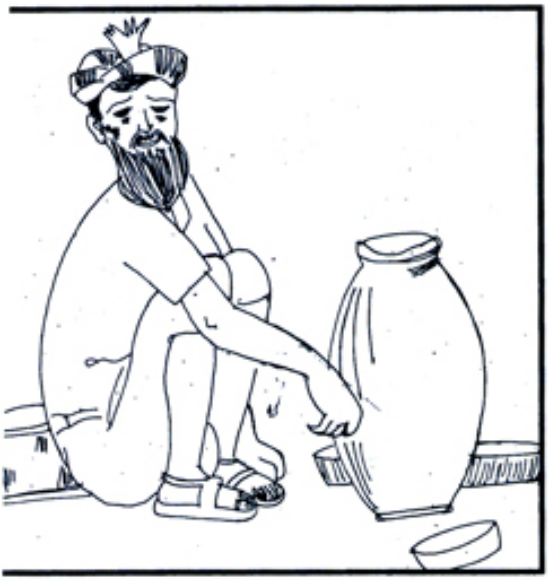
Dear Gaurav, pl. send your house address.

M.S. Yamini, VI,
Annai Velankanni MHSS,
Chennai.

GOKULAM ART GALLERY

D. Preetha, age 10,
B.D. Memorial
Institute,
Calcutta.

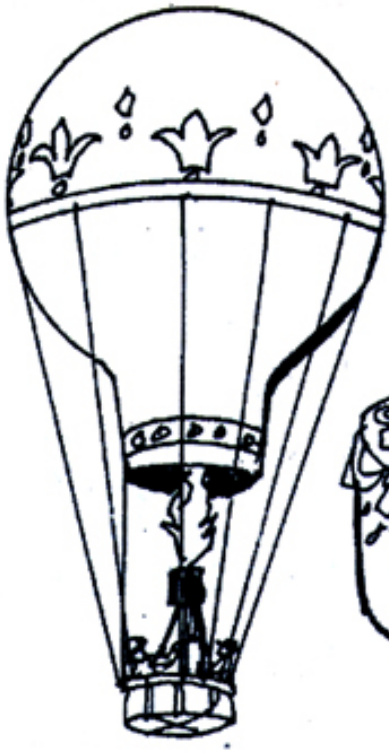
V. Monisha, VIII,
St. John's
Eng. Med. School,
Nellore.



U. Manju Narmada, VII,
DAV Girls School, Chennai.

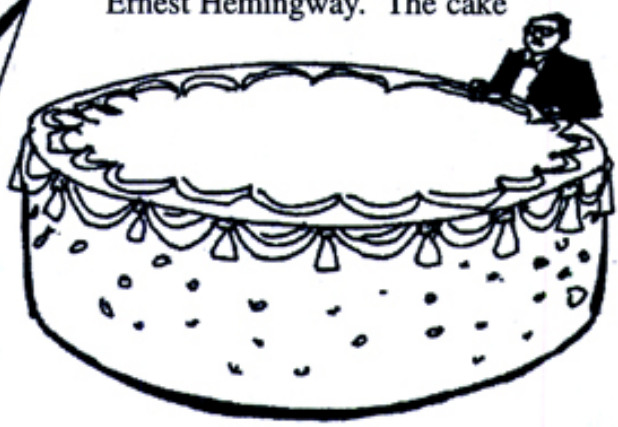
Raghav Anil Kumar, age 8,
Mahajana HS,
Mysore.

SNIPPETS



Hemingway's b'day cake

A cake weighing 270 kg. was served at the birth anniversary of Ernest Hemingway. The cake



was transported by a truck. The seven foot diametre confection was made from 280 boxes of cake mix and 152 litres of frosting.

Tallest hot air balloon

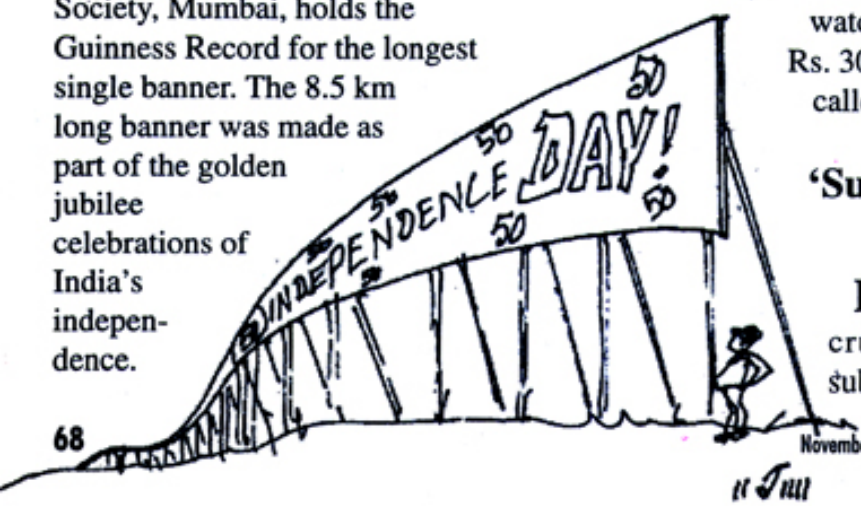
A giant hot air balloon called 'Bibendum' or 'Michelin Man' was flown in Bangkok in July. The 50 m high balloon weighed 1,048 kg. The balloon has been displayed in more than 20 countries.

Costly wrist watch

Piaget Company has launched a wrist watch which costs Rs. 30 million. It is called 'Kanthara'.

Longest single banner

The South Indian Education Society, Mumbai, holds the Guinness Record for the longest single banner. The 8.5 km long banner was made as part of the golden jubilee celebrations of India's independence.



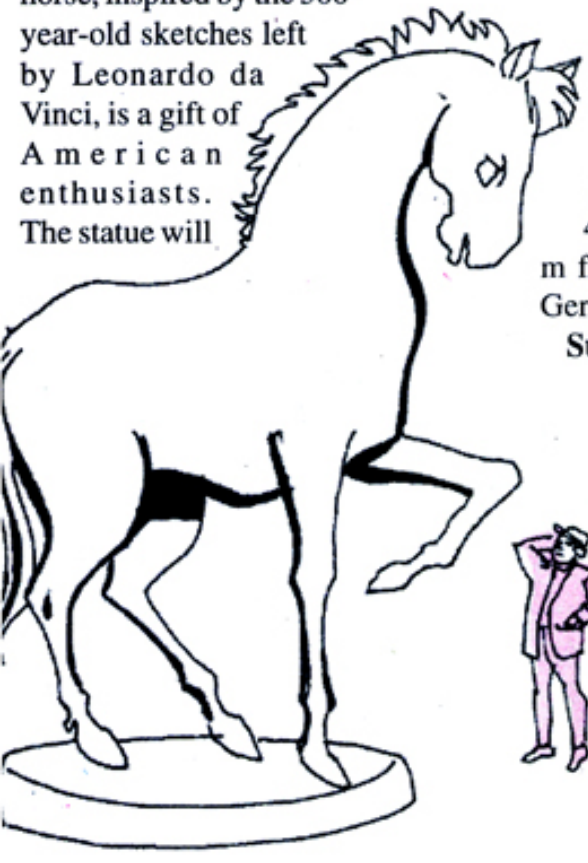
'Submarine cycle'

David Adrian cruised on a submarine cycle

invented by him. The cycle can reach a speed of 5 kmph on surface. Underwater, it is twice as fast as using fins.

Largest statue

The world's largest statue of a horse, inspired by the 500 year-old sketches left by Leonardo da Vinci, is a gift of American enthusiasts. The statue will soon be on permanent display at Milan in Italy.



Pole sitting record

Five Germans made a Guinness record for pole sitting. They sat for 62 days and showed no sign of giving up. They are competing for a cheque worth $13,650. They are sitting on 40cm by 60 cm planks staked 2.5 m from the ground in parks in Germany.

Suresh K. Anjum, Calcutta.

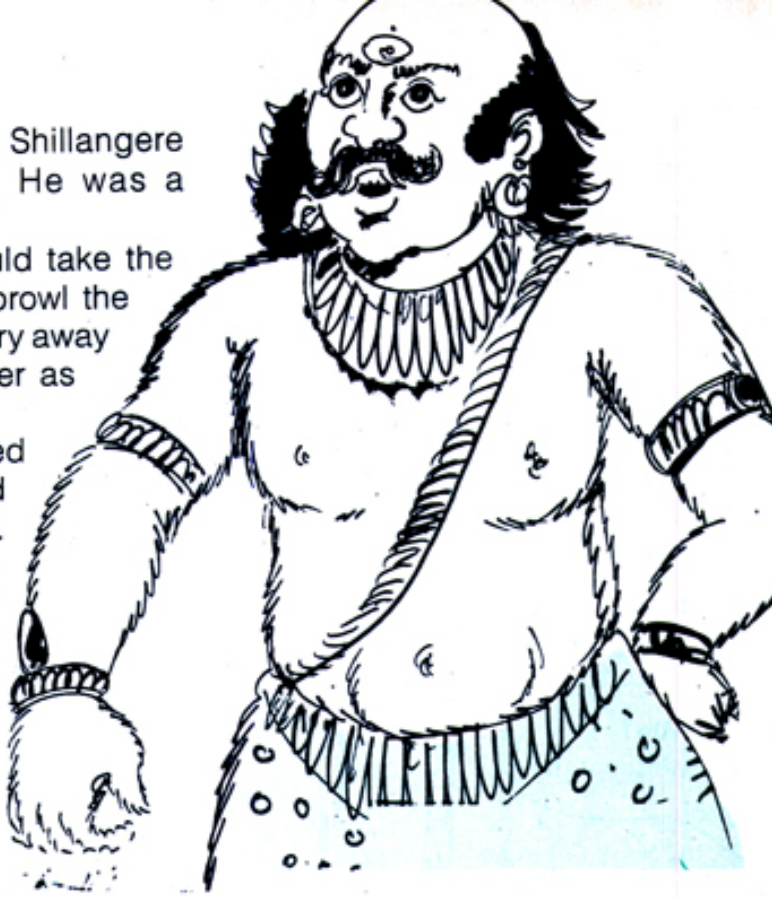
SNIPPETS

THE FOOLISH GIANT

In the forests of Shillangere lived a giant. He was a sorcerer too.

Often he would take the form of a tiger and prowl the village. He would carry away the cattle or a villager as food.

The villagers feared the giant and wondered how to get rid of him. One day a young man called Kapildas came to the village. Kapildas was known to be a clever man. The villagers approached Kapildas and asked him to find a way to get rid of the giant.



Kapildas promised to help the villagers. He spent a sleepless night trying to device a plan. Early next morning an idea occurred to him.

Two days later, he set out in

the morning with his buffalo and his pet cat. He had starved his pet cat the previous day.

When Kapildas and his animals reached the cave where the giant lived, it was noon.

The giant roared when he smelt human presence. He walked out of the cave and asked, "who is that?"

Kapildas prostrated before the giant and said, "Oh great man. I am an admirer of your sorcery. I wish to present this buffalo as my humble gift to you."

Kapildas praised the giant so much that the giant's vanity was tickled. The giant said, "I am very pleased with you. What can I do for you?"

"Oh great giant, I have a petty desire. I have seen you take the form of a tiger and a jackal. Can you take the form of a small animal too? For instance, a rat?"

The giant laughed loudly and said, "Why not? Look here."

In a moment the giant had transformed himself into a mouse. The starved cat which noticed the mouse immediately pounced on it. Before the giant could realise it, the cat had begun to tear apart the mouse and eat it.

The villagers learnt about the end of the giant. They thanked and praised Kapildas' cleverness.

Kolar Krishna Iyer,
Tirupati

A GAME OF CHESS

Chess is a lovely game where two
great brains meet
One out wits the other by a move so
neat!
King, queen, soldiers, bishops and
knights
Together they all fight,
Asking for their own right.
Winning is their motive,
Yet they are very sportive.
They chalk out a series of plans
To see their opponent knocked off
the stand!

They battle on for hours
Each move calculated with brain
power.
The one who has determination
and skill,
Will certainly move in for the kill!
The one who keeps his cool till the
battle is over,
Becomes the winner and is
considered very clever!

by N. Havesh, IX A,
Velammal Mat. HSS., Chennai

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COVER FEATURE

OF LIGHTS AND SOUND

Each state of India has its own reasons for celebrating a festival. Some states have festivals that are state specific. Diwali is a national festival. It is a festival of lights and fireworks.

In Tamil Nadu, people believe that Diwali is celebrated to mark the death of an asura (demon) called Naraka. Lord Krishna is believed to have killed Naraka in a fierce battle on this day.

Subjects who had been oppressed by Naraka, celebrated his death by wearing new clothes and feasting. Fireworks were of course, a part of this celebration. People anoint oil and bathe early in the morning.

This is usually referred to as 'Ganga' snanam. Sweets are then exchanged between relatives and friends. Relatives visit each other and youngsters take the blessings of adults. There is a general feeling of bonhomie.

The business community of the north and the western India attach more importance to Lakshmi puja which is also celebrated during this time. Many people rid the house of cobwebs or repaint their houses just before Diwali. Businessmen start their financial year

In Maharashtra, Diwali is a day for lighting fireworks and wearing new clothes. Sweets and savouries are exchanged among friends and relatives. The day after Diwali is celebrated as Bhau beej or brother's day. Sisters visit brothers and arrange elaborate feasts in their honour. Gifts are exchanged and a wish for each other's good health is also expressed on this day.

Traditional Maharashtrians anoint their body with oil and use herbs on Diwali day to rejuvenate themselves.

In UP, people celebrate it as the anniversary of Lord Rama's return to Ayodhya. After his exile for 14 years, Lord Rama returned to Ayodhya to take over the reigns of the kingdom. People light lamps and fireworks. Sweets and greetings are exchanged.

Diwali is not as elaborately celebrated as Durga puja in Calcutta. The excitement relatively dies down here after Durga puja. A few do celebrate the occasion by lighting lamps. Fireworks are more common during Durga puja.

Kerala too does not place much importance to Diwali. Traditional Keralites celebrate Onam. Yet, the fun and excitement of a national festival such as Diwali is not totally lost even in this state.

on the day of Lakshmi puja.

New account books are placed before the idol of the goddess. Gold ornaments, rupee notes and coins are also placed. People pray for continued prosperity.

THE SACRED TREE

The peepul is one of the longest living trees in the world. It can live for hundreds, perhaps thousands of years. One in Srilanka is said to be over 2000 years old.

The peepul is venerated by both Hindus and Buddhists. Hindus plant it near their temples and associate it with their trinity, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. For Buddhists it is sacred because Lord Buddha found enlightenment under its soothing shade.

Stories are rife in many villages about haunted peepul trees. All this is a blessing in disguise for the peepul tree. Few people would dare harm it, let alone cut it down. No wonder, then, that the peepul is found all over India. Like the banyan and the gular, it is a member of the fig family.

Unlike the banyan, which is dark and enveloping, the peepul allows light to pass through its branches and appears airy. Unlike the banyan's roots supporting the branches, the peepul roots are attached to the trunk. This gives it an appearance of having props stabilising it.

This fast growing tree needs a lot

BUDDING CHEF

PINEAPPLE CAKE

You need :

Bread sponge 1
Cream 1½ bowl
Pineapple 1 - cut into slices
Cherries 3 - 4

Method :

Place the bread sponge on a tray. Cover the top of the sponge with cream. Decorate with pineapple slices and cherries. Serve with a long glass of cool drink.

Nishant Lodha, Std III D, Birla HS, Mumbai.

Dear Nishant, pl. send your house address.

of space. Its roots go deep into the ground. Occasionally the peepul is epiphytic, that is, it grows on a wall or another tree. Its strong roots may even split the wall or the tree. However, the tree derives nourishment from air and water and not from the host.

A full-grown peepul tree reaches a height of about 15 m. The branches spread out and the leaves are heart-shaped. Since the leaf tips are pointed, water drains off the leaves immediately after a rainfall. This helps the tree to remain dry and crisp.

The flowers of the peepul cannot be seen as they are hidden within its fruits. The peepul figs which grow in pairs are perpetually haunted by insects. Birds and bats also visit the tree. Humans do not relish peepul figs as they are small and hard, unlike the large juicy fruits of the edible fig, the anjir or gular.

The peepul has medicinal value. Its bark contains tannin and has astringent properties. An infusion of the bark is used to cure ulcer and skin diseases.

The leaves and tender shoots are used as a laxative. They also make excellent fodder for elephants.

The sacred peepul that sanctifies temple precincts also graces roadsides. It provides respite to hot and weary travellers. Like any other tree, it also enriches the soil, prevents soil erosion and refreshes the air.

Velayudhan Features

WHAT IS THE COST?

Ganesh had 20 rupees. He bought 3 apples. But they cost 24 rupees. So he returned an apple and bought 4 lemons. But the cost of 4 lemons is equal to the cost of an apple. Now he bought 8 bananas by returning another apple and 3 lemons. Now the total cost of an apple, 8 bananas and a lemon is Rs. 20. What is the cost of one apple, one lemon and one banana?

K. Muthukumar, XI A,
NAAMHSS, Rajapalayam.

Answer: Cost of one apple = Rs. 8.00
Cost of one lemon = Rs. 2.00
Cost of one banana = Rs. 1.25

USHA'S UNIQUE RECORD

PT Usha, the sprint queen from Kerala, won her 101st medal at the International Sports Meet on Sept. 30. This medal, a gold, came when the Indian women's team won the 4 X 100 m relay race at the SAF Games. PT Usha, has been participating in international meets for the past 19 years. Athletes like Mercy Kuttan, Rita Sen, Amrit Paul Singh and Tamilarasan, who began their career with her have since retired.

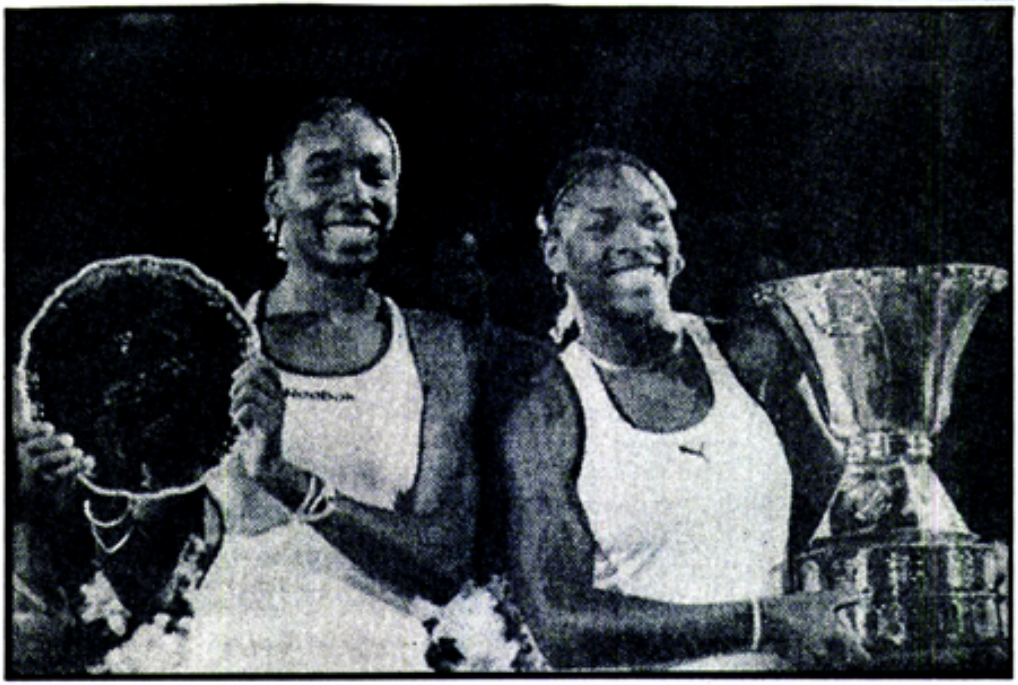
Her 100th medal was a silver which she claimed after coming second in 200 m. meet for women. Her first medal came at the Pakistan National Games in Karachi in 1980. She won the gold.

Her best year in terms of achievement was 1986 when she won 16 medals. Of them 13 were gold.

PT Usha has indicated that this might be her last year in competitions.

Tennis

The world's richest tennis tournament became a family affair. The Munich Grand Slam Cup and the prize money of $900,000 went to Serena Williams. Venus Williams was the runner up.



* Venus and Serena Williams. Serena beat Venus in three sets.

The SAF Games

The eighth SAF (South Asian Federation) Games held in Kathmandu saw a huge Indian contingent. Neither was India disappointed. Indian athletes have lifted quite a number of medals in the track, swimming and wrestling events besides archery. As usual, India has taken the gold in Kabaddi. It finished off its gold medal tally with 101 medals.

* Nisha Millet won seven golds in swimming

Cricket

Despite making it to the finals, the Indians could not win the cup at Nairobi. The match between Zimbabwe and India was a sizzler. The India - South Africa match showed us up as only a poor second. This despite our fielders doing an excellent job.

In the world cricket ranking while Australia tops, India stands third. With Sachin expected back in the team India may probably look to winning a few of the upcoming matches. Besides, the team has a new coach. Anshuman Gaekwad has been replaced by Kapil Dev. Kapil Dev's fans may look forward to India winning a few matches.

Here's one for the record.

Sunil Joshi's bowling this season —

10 overs 6 runs 5 wickets.

Who's out there to beat this?

HORROR STORY CONTEST

We thank all participants for their enthusiastic response. The entries ranged from simple fears that arose from shadow plays to bizarre and grotesque blood-sucking vampires. There were stories about the dead revisiting their loved ones.

We selected the winners based on their approach to the theme. As you read the winning entries you will realise that 'horror' is not merely about ghosts.

Even day-to-day sounds and sights can sometimes scare you.

Published here is the first prize winning story. The other prize winning stories will appear in forth coming issues of Gokulam.

Winners : 1st Prize — Rs. 200/- M. Rajesh, VIII C, KV 2, Kandigai.

2nd Prize — Rs. 150/- Sitara Sethumadhavan, age 13, Al Rayyan National Pvt. School, U.A.E.

3rd Prize — Rs. 100/- R. Aishwarya, VIII B, Modern Sr. S.S., Chennai.

A STRANGE VISIT

Ravi had just returned from school. He was tired and decided a small nap would refresh him. His mother asked him to drink a glass of milk before going to sleep.

A little later his sister Rita returned from school. Rita studied in standard VIII while Ravi was in standard V. Rita and Ravi shared a room. Their flat was on the third floor.

Each room of the flat opened out to a balcony.

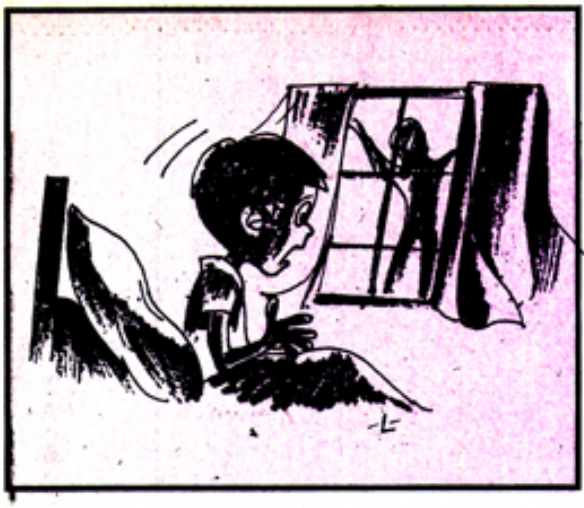
Ravi's father loved gardening. In the balcony stood potted plants. Tulsi, rose and a few ornamental plants adorned the balcony beyond the children's room.

When Ravi woke up, his sister suggested that they play carrom. Usually Rita won. Sometimes she would teach Ravi to play the game.

That evening when Ravi switched on the TV, a film was being telecast. He was afraid of thrillers but he couldn't bring himself to switch off the TV set. The film was about a man who was bitten by a large, poisonous lizard.

Ravi watched in terror. He noticed that neither his parents nor Rita were disturbed by the film. Ravi's father asked him, "What happend Ravi?", when he saw Ravi's ashen face.

Ravi merely



shook his head. When the lights were switched off that night Ravi prayed that he should sleep immediately. The poisonous lizard continued to haunt his imagination long after Rita had slept. Even mother had gone to bed.

The night bulb cast a dim glow. Ravi was taken aback when the light suddenly went off. He looked up. To his shock he saw a large lizard on the bulb. He thought the lizard was eyeing him maliciously.

He prayed that the lizard should go away. Sometime during the prayer Ravi fell asleep.

The clock struck twelve. Ravi woke up with a start. Hadn't he heard something? He looked at the clock. Midnight. This was the hour of ghosts. He covered his face with the bedsheet and closed his eyes tightly.

He must have dozed. Suddenly there was a noise. As if someone was scratching his nails on the window pane. He opened one eye and peeped out of the bedcover. The window swung to and fro. 'Ah, the ghosts have arrived,' he thought.

It was winter. But Ravi was sweating! His throat was parched. He looked at Rita. She was fast asleep. He shook her pillow. Will she wake up? Two people could tackle a ghost. But how could he chase away the ghost all by himself? Rita wouldn't wake up. He desperately wanted a glass of water.

He waited. Suddenly birds started screeching. Did the birds see the ghost? He said to himself, 'if I go to sleep, I can escape seeing the ghost. I shan't remember anything when I wake up tomorrow'.

When he next woke up the sun was up. He called out, "Rita, Rita... wake up." He looked at the window. Beyond the window on the tall tree sat a couple of monkeys. Had they been the strange visitors?

Before he could come to any conclusion his father walked into the room and said cheerfully, "Good morning. Do you see those monkeys? They created quite a ruckus last night."

Ravi laughed. He was really relieved.

M. Rajesh, VIII C,
KV 2, Kandigai, Chennai.

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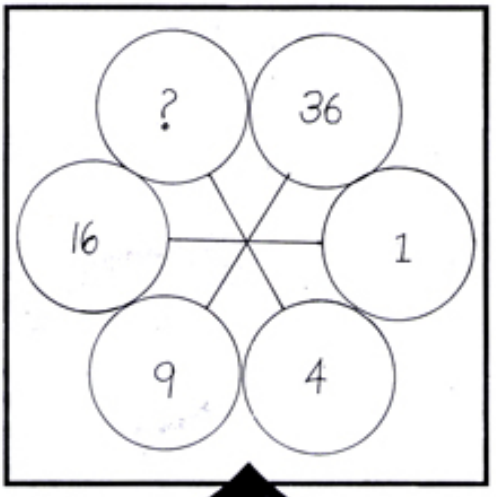
NAME GAME

FIND THE MISSING NUMBER

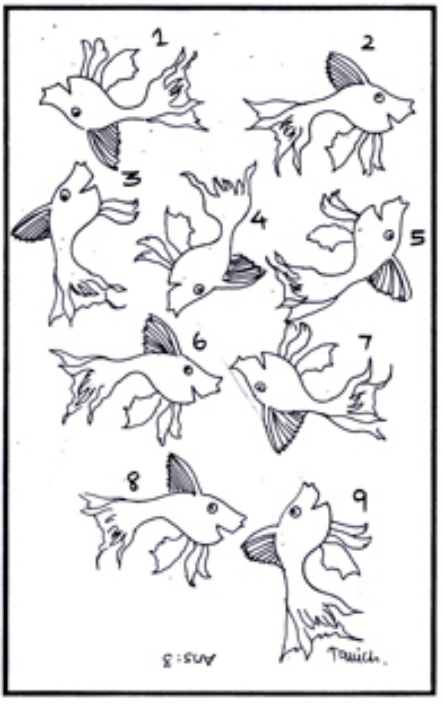


Answer : 25 Method

1+3 = 4 (3+2 = 5)
4+5 = 9 (5+2 = 7)
9+7 = 16 (7+2 =9)
16+9 = 25 (9+2 = 11)
25+11 = 36

HELP THE GIRL REACH THE KITTEN

FIND THE ODD FISH



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